

THE AUSTRALIAN BICYCLE MAGAZINE \$2.50  
NUMBER THIRTY TWO OCTOBER 1985

# Freewheeling

**HEADING  
FOR A  
MOUNTAIN  
BIKE  
SUMMER**

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**FAT TYRE  
FEATURE**

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**WE SURVEY  
29 MODELS**



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MODEL NO. 2781



## 12 SPEED TRI-A

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CYCLES



# Freewheeling

I CAN STILL REMEMBER  
THE GOOD OLD DAYS  
WHEN THE FASTEST  
THING ON THE ROAD  
WAS THE POSTIE!



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## FREEWHEELING 32

### DEPARTMENTS

AUSTRALIA A WHEEL .....	75
BIKE EVENTS .....	79
CLASSIFIEDS .....	79
NEW PRODUCTS .....	9
RAMBLING .....	80
REVIEWERS NOTE BOOK .....	81
SUBSCRIPTION INFO .....	77
WRITE ON .....	5

## CONTENTS

### MOUNTAIN BIKE FEATURE

<b>RETURN TO NEWNES — A FAT TYRE ADVENTURE</b> .....	21
Following an abandoned railway line	
<b>MOUNTAIN BIKES FOR EVERYONE</b> .....	28
Our market survey compares 29 models	
<b>TECHNIQUE FOR THE TRAIL</b> .....	28
Riding the rough roads requires new skills	
<b>EIGHT MOUNTAIN BIKES ROAD TESTED</b> .....	37
We individually test 8 bikes across a wide price range	
<b>SOMERVILLE</b> .....	47
Cartoonist Phil Somerville's fat tyre fantasy	
<b>FAT TYRE NEWS</b> .....	48
News of racing events	

### BICYCLE TOURING

<b>THE REPCO FREEWHEELING SYDNEY TO THE 'GONG RIDE</b> ...	50
Prizes and fashion parade are some of this year's attractions	
<b>NZ A GREAT PLACE FOR A BIKE RIDE</b> .....	64
Ray Peace joins a guided tour in New Zealand	
<b>THE CALTEX GREAT VICTORIAN BIKE RIDE</b> .....	64
News of this year's big big ride	
<b>RIDING THE OODNATDATTATTA TRACK</b> .....	71
Two cyclists travel the dry outback route to the Alice	

### FEATURES

<b>THE SHORTEST AND THE LONGEST DAY</b> .....	15
Age is no barrier when you ride with Audax	
<b>PENNY FARTHING CYCLIST BREAKS RECORD</b> .....	55
A Melbourne rider sets new Adelaide — Melbourne record	
<b>TOWARDS A NATIONAL BIKE COMMITTEE</b> .....	66
Alan Parker outlines proposals for the NBC	

### ROAD TESTS AND REVIEWS

<b>MOUNTAIN BIKE TESTS</b> .....	37
Models tested: Southern Cross Decathlon II and Manly 10; Graecross Pathfinder; Repco Sierra; Gemini Trails; Clamont Coronet; Hillman Sherpa; Apollo Sierra Grande	
<b>FOCUS RS 500</b> .....	81

Cover photo: Heading for a mountain bike summer. Photography by Warren Salomon. Illustration this page: Cartoonist Don Hatcher comments on this issue's feature theme — the wonderful world of fat tyre travel.

# Royal Gran Compe

## A TRULY PERFECT BRAKE THAT HAS EVERYTHING BUT COMPETITION.

Pretty strong words. Yes, but we stand behind them. Compare the new RGC 400 with all the rest and you will be pleasantly surprised. All the features, performance and craftsmanship you could ask for, at a price you won't believe.

The shape of the special cold-forged, alloy arms has been analyzed and refined to put more material right where you need it and less where you don't. Resulting in incredibly rigid and stiff arms, that together with a heavy-duty spring, give the RGC 400 a response and feel that is quick, firm and precise.

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The Royal Gran Compe from Dia-Compe, whether it's world class racing or world wide touring, you won't find a better brake anywhere.

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## Write On

### More debate on compulsory helmets

With regards to compulsory use of helmets, I agree wholeheartedly with J J Simmons of Forestville (Write On Issue 31), about his objections to the possible legislation, but would like to point out further drawbacks. Mr Simmons just briefly mentioned the short trip around the corner to the deli. There are many instances of this nature and especially when one borrows a bike for five minutes, for example a child in a country town.

If one tries to obey the law and borrows a helmet in most cases it would be the wrong size. There is more likely to be an accident from the misery of a tight fit or from a loose or floppy helmet especially if it falls over one's eyes or needs a hand to steady it.

What about the many bike hire places of which I have had experience. For seven years I ran the largest bike hire business in the mainland of Australia. I often had between 100 and 200 bikes out at once. If helmets were compulsory some of the regulars would have their own but it must be remembered that the size of the head does not go with the size of the bicycle. Therefore to fit people out with the correct sizes I would estimate 150 helmets would be necessary for 100 bicycles.

There is also the problem of people not being willing to use a helmet that has just been returned because it is hot and sweaty. Perhaps a throw away liner could be the answer but this would create more expense and hence less business. Also, people not familiar with the wearing of helmets could easily end up with one that does not fit properly, hence the further likelihood of an increase in accidents.

By all means encourage the use of helmets. The cycle trade appears to be doing the right thing in this regard, but if compulsory legislation were to be introduced and properly policed, then there would certainly be a drop off in the use of the bicycle.

Jack Hepher Bundanoon

Congratulations on your excellent coverage of issues relating to bicycle safety helmets in the May/June issue of *Freewheeling*.

Tim Colebatch in his article *A Spoke in the Wheel of Freedom* put a strong case for choice rather than compulsion with respect to helmet use. I personally agree with this approach. However, real freedom of choice must

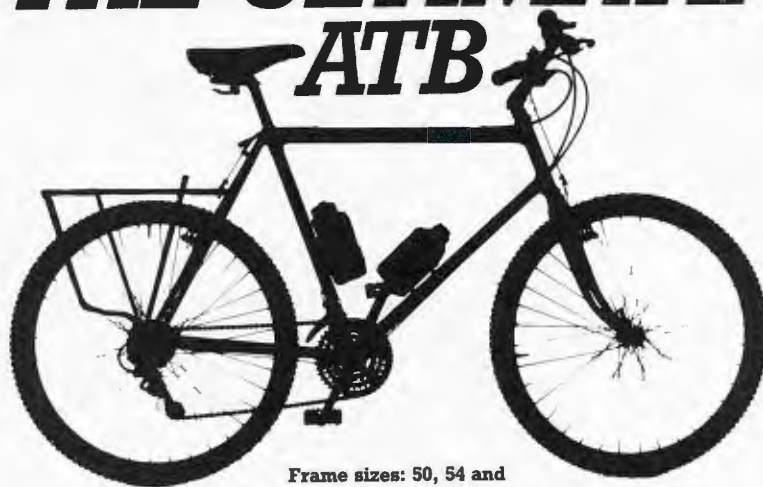
be founded on a complete information base, especially regarding the risk factors involved.

Our gut feelings for relative risk are very often wrong. For example, many people feel safer in a car than in a plane, despite the fact that air travel is demonstrably at least a couple of orders of magnitude safer.

Assessment of the risk of head injury for pedal cyclists is a new field with the earliest recognition of its importance being less than ten years ago. At that time we learned that some 85% of bicyclists killed suffer head injuries.

But fatalities represent the tip of the iceberg as shown in studies which

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# Write On

have only been published in the last year.

For example, how many cyclists know that about 10% of all road users admitted to hospital are pedal cyclists? Of these, approximately half have suffered head injuries.

How many cyclists know that only 20% of bicyclists hospitalised have had a crash with a car, while 80% have simply fallen off their bikes? Finally, how many know that the chance of head injury in a simple fall is almost exactly the same as that for a collision with a motor vehicle?

In view of these facts it is difficult to imagine any circumstance for which the risk of head injury is acceptably small.

The Dutch cyclists who, according to Tim's article, would laugh at the thought of wearing helmets, might think again if they realised that at least 300 of the 400 who are killed annually in that country would still be enjoying their cycling if they had recognised the risk and were protected. This is not to mention the

thousands who must have received serious non-fatal head injuries.

John G. Mathieson  
President, Newcastle Cycleways Movement  
President, Bicycle Federation of Australia

**Freewheeling** readers interested in further information on this topic could write to John Mathieson at P.O. Box 58, New Lambton NSW 2305 (if possible enclosing \$2 to cover costs) for a copy of his paper *Bicycle Safety in Australia - A Comprehensive Review*. This was presented to the National Road Safety Symposium held in Canberra last year.

## Mountain Trail

With regard to your Overland Wilderness Cycle Trail - what an interesting concept!

Boy, you have your work cut out for you, that's for sure - I can see a couple of problems arising here - (1) poorly marked trails, (2) a long way between refueling (food) points and (3) if you stick to the top of the Great Divide it's bloody cold, as at Walcha your car tyres

freeze to the ground and you can't drive away in winter. (Winter is about 9 months of the year.)

Now after we dispose of these things (minor problems really) you can go from Taree to Kempsey without touching the bitumen if you want to - it may take you a while, but you can do it - you may need a 4WD bike but still it's much the same as the Megalong Valley.

I drove a GMC 6WD fire tanker through once - maybe a 'pushy' would have been easier. A hint, go and see the Forestry Commission re forest roads, they are better maintained than fire trails, but only when forestry operations are in progress. Signposting is flexible and the most well used trail may not be the one you want. Watch out for a 'Kenny' in low-low with 45 tons on the back or a kamikaze rally car driver hopelessly 'crossed up' with 100 ks on the clock; both are a problem up here. But so too are roos, wallabies, the biggest goannas you can imagine and beautiful blondes skinny dipping in mountain streams.

Dennis Hill  
Beechwood NSW

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# New Products and Ideas



## Roulandt recumbent

Recumbent bicycles are making a comeback in Europe and North America. Now a Dutch made version is available in Australia called the Roulandt. This unique bicycle seats the rider in a specially designed semi reclining seat and allows the strong back and thigh muscles to be used for powerful pedalling.

The Roulandt is available in a six-speed version with a top gear of 100 and a low of 54. The bike is controlled from handlebars located below the seat. The price is unspecified but is thought to be over the \$700 mark.

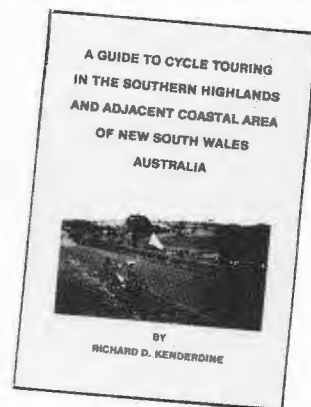
Enquiries should be made to the importer: Bicycle House, 166 Welshpool Rd., Welshpool WA 6106. Telephone (09) 451 6157.

## Hooray for halogen

Cyclists used to the extra brightness and reduced power consumption of their halogen headlamps can now get the same benefits when they go camping. The Energizer range of waterproof torches from battery maker Eveready uses halogen globes in each of its four models.

The compact 2251 model uses two D-size batteries and is ideal for camping. When used with Eveready alkaline batteries they produce long

lasting bright white halogen light. Prices range from around \$10 for the 2251 up to \$32 for the 9171 searchlight. All torches are made from impact resistant non corrosive plastic. The four models plus replacement globes are available from Eveready retailers.



## Touring Book

A new touring guide book with the lengthy title of *A Guide to Cycle Touring in the Southern Highlands and Adjacent Coastal Area of New South Wales Australia* has been published by its author Richard Kenderdine. Richard who lives in Canberra has written this 54 page volume to help people to explore the large numbers of good roads in the main touring region between Sydney and Canberra.

The book describes 24 rides between Moss Vale and Nowra. Many of the trips are suitable for beginners and are accompanied with sketch maps and photographs. Copies of this book which sells for around \$6.00 are available from selected bike shops or from the author at: 184 Dexter St., Cook ACT 2614.

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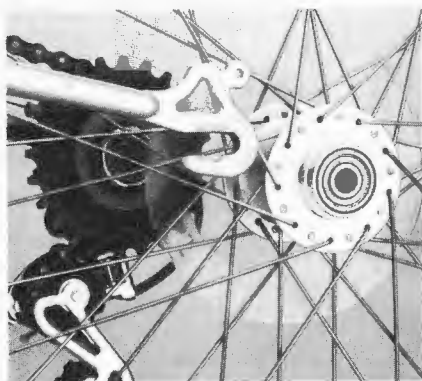
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# New Products and Ideas



## Internal and External Geared Hubs

The new era of cycling has produced some very interesting ideas particularly for the tourist type bicycle.

Over the years the racing style cycle has been the beneficiary of all the new and wonderful ideas. This has been of some advantage to the cyclist interested in daily tours or weekend and holiday long distance rides. Now the introduction of two new hubs from Germany should be of interest to the tourist cyclist.

Sach Orbit is produced in Germany by the Fitchel and Sach A.G. Company. This hub has an alloy shell for lightness and is a 2-speed axle type, capable of an additional 6 clog cluster giving you 12-speed, *without* a double chainwheel. Simply, this means your present 5-speed or single speed cycle can become a 12-speed by fitting a new Sach Orbit hub (or wheel) into your cycle.

This method also allows a chain-guard to be used, which is impossible with the double chainwheel system. The cluster cogs are fitted in singles on a splined cassette giving you the choice of teeth. The hub transmission ratio is —

1st speed 1:1 — 2nd speed 1:0.74.

This hub is also available in a drum brake model.

The Sach Galaxie free wheel hub is unique in that you may remove the wheel from your cycle leaving the cluster attached as in the usual riding position with chain and rear derailleur also in their permanent position. No more dirty and greasy hands whilst removing or attaching your wheel for transport or repairs, but by a simple quick release action and the unscrewing of the quick

release skewer your wheel is removed.

The Galaxie hub is also made with high grade alloy body with the same cog attachment as the Orbit and also come in a drum brake model. Another feature of this hub is that the hub itself runs on separate roller bearings apart from the cassette which make s for far smoother and easier pedalling.

Sach hubs are distributed throughout Australia by Bicycle

Buyers Co. Ltd., Bayswater, Victoria. Catalogues and Price List are available and, of course, spare parts.

## Camping light

Cycle campers who often find them selves in the dark will find this new lighting unit very handy. The torch light is sold and distributed by the Paddy Pallin organisation and consists of a main unit powered by



## THE REPCO SIERRA

The Repco Sierra ATB is superbly constructed from 4130 Chromoly steel. The 70° head and seat tube angle is designed to give you optimum handling for both on or off road cycling.

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Excellent choice of components are used throughout, SR MTP 110 pedals, 175MM TGT cranks, fully adjustable alloy seat pillar, SUNTOUR MOUNTECH gears, all that you have come to expect from a quality REPCO bicycle.

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SIZE	PSI	TPI	GRAM WT
27x1	100	100	195
700x25			195

### GENERAL

#### Commuter

The name says it all. The Commuter tyre offers durability and performance at an economy price. We use a tough nylon casing with a beefy rubber sidewall for durability and strength. The tread has a deep ribbed pattern for the excellent lateral stability needed for confident maneuvering in heavy traffic.

27x1 1/4	85	25	500
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### TOURING

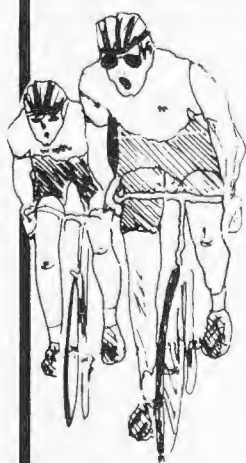
#### Touring K4

For the durability you thought you had to sacrifice for high performance we designed the K4 tyre. We laminated a thin belt of Kevlar belting between the nylon casings for added puncture protection.

27x1 1/8	95	36	360
700x28			355
27x1 1/4			370
700x32			360



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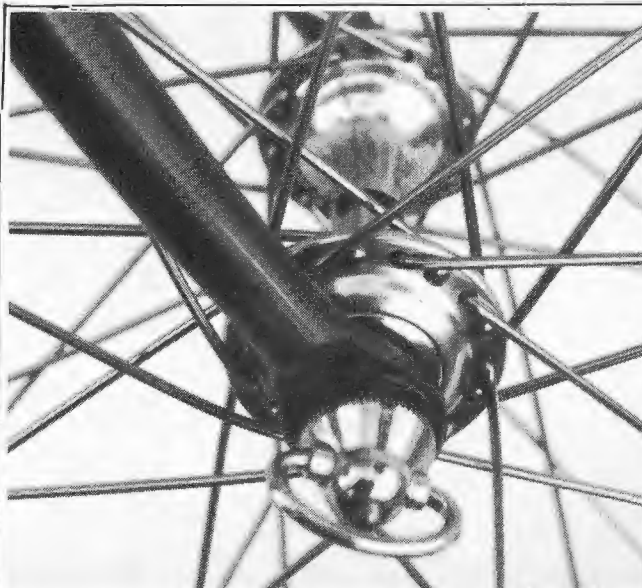
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# New Products and Ideas

## Kids trailers

The Bike Bug is a trailer capable of towing two small children. The trailer has a fibreglass body supported by independently mounted 20 inch wheels. Its adjustable tow bar allows connection to bikes from 20 to 28 inch. The Bike Bug has a flexible hitch and a safety chain. Safety aspects are stressed by the makers who have included handle bars, dual harnesses wheel and rear reflectors and non slip floor as part of the equipment.



four pen light batteries and an auxiliary headlamp unit. The headlamp easily straps onto your forehead and is powered from the main unit by means of a one metre extension lead. Both lights give a good beam and can be run at the same time giving excellent light for cooking at night.



Wholesale and retail enquiries for the Bike Bug can be made to the manufacturers: Ferga Pty Ltd (03) 772 0062.



The Daisy Bicycle Chariot is an ideal way of taking small children with you on tour or around town. This fibreglass trailer offers comfortable seating for two children or a load of gear. The Bicycle Chariot uses 20 inch wheels and a specially designed trailer hitch which connects to the seat pillar of any adult size bike.

Trade and retail enquiries can be made to John Klose, Yankalilla Cycles (085) 58 2758



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# Buying a helmet – why not buy the best lifesaver?

More and more people are very wisely buying a bicycle safety helmet to protect their most valuable asset – their Brain.

However there still exists a lot of ignorance about the protective abilities of many helmets on the market and the relevant criteria for a good helmet.

## FACT: A styrofoamed lined helmet is the most effective.

In most impact situations the working part of the helmet is the Styrofoam liner that's about 1/2" thick. This seemingly-rigid material starts to crush at a load of about 1,000 lbs., and this load is fairly constant until all the bubbles are squeezed flat, at a thickness of about 1/8". That 3/8" of compression at a constant load makes the difference.

When your bike goes out from under you, your head falls for about half a second. That's half a second at one *g*, the acceleration produced by your own weight. If your head hits the pavement without a helmet, it stops in about half a millisecond (half a thousandth of a second). Because the deceleration time is 1,000 times shorter than the acceleration time, the deceleration has to be 1,000 times greater, or 1,000 *g*. Since your head weighs about 10 lbs., the force at the point of impact is about 10,000 lbs., and since your brain weighs about 2 lbs., it slams against the inside of your skull with a force of about 2,000 lbs. Blood vessels rupture, just as in a stroke, the pressure builds up, circulation stops, and parts of your brain die. As they die, so go the abilities, feelings, knowledge, personality traits or whatever else those parts of your brain contain. Just gone, never to return.

With a properly-designed helmet, things are different. It takes your head about five milliseconds to fall through the crush thickness of the Styrofoam, going slower and slower all the time until it stops. Since the time is about 10 times longer than without a helmet, the deceleration is only 1/10 as great, about 100 *g*, and your brain can stand that without, usually, any apparent injury.

Apollo Dalyte helmets have one of the lowest *g* ratings of any bicycle safety helmet in the World. At 1.5 metre height they have a peak *g* loading of 130 *g* (av.).

Before purchasing a bicycle helmet ascertain what are the *g* ratings of the various helmets in consideration.

## FACT: Holes in a helmet are not necessary to provide adequate ventilation.

Testing has proven that a full shell design without holes provides optimum structural strength. As one cannot predict how they will fall optimum strength is required at every point of the helmet. A full shell also prevents branches, gravel, pointed objects, bees and insects from entering the helmet.

## Here are 6 reasons why you should buy a helmet.

### 1. Your brain is important and delicate

Your brain is the most important part of your body, very sensitive to impacts at even these low speeds.

### 2. Brain injuries cause the most deaths and disabling injuries to cyclists

Seventy-five percent of cycling deaths, and probably the same percentage of disabling injuries, are directly caused by brain injury.

### 3. Brain injuries are horrible

You may be courageous in the face of death, but have you met the unfortunate victims of brain injury? Many cannot converse: they know what they want to say, but cannot find the appropriate words to express their thoughts.

### 4. Falling impact speeds are low

Ten to 15 mph is the falling speed at which your head hits the pavement in most types of cycling accidents. Hitting at skidding speed merely rubs off hair and skin, which grow back; the falling speed is what injures the brain, which doesn't recover.

### 5. Protection is possible

With good materials and careful design, helmets can provide the degree of protection, while being comfortable to wear.

### 6. You cannot predict an accident

On any ride you may catch a wheel in a crack in the road surface, skid on gravel, hit a wide pothole or drain grate, or collide with another vehicle, dog or pedestrian. Since car-bike collisions cause only 12% of casualties to cyclists and the other dangers are present on every ride, helmets are needed even in quiet rural areas, and especially where fast descents increase the probability of accidents.

## Here are just 3 reasons why you should buy an Apollo Dalyte helmet.

1. The Apollo Dalyte helmet is manufactured to Australian Standard 2063.
2. The Apollo Dalyte's unique construction has a twin ABS plastic shell with a thick layer of Styrofoam in between, giving lightness without compromising strength. This unique construction gives the helmet one of the lowest *g* ratings in the world. At 1.5 metres they have a peak *g* loading of 130 *g* (av.).
3. Maximum protection and cool comfort. Full perimeter air flow – not just slits or holes. The distinctive airflow ventilation system means no need for holes in the shell. The helmet is suspended away from the head – a design engineered to allow the flow of cool air to circulate between the top of the head and the helmet.

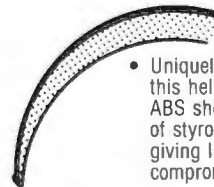
Before you buy you owe it to yourself to inspect the Apollo Dalyte helmet at your nearest World of Wheels specialist bicycle store.

### Apollo Dalyte Helmet

Maximum protection and cool comfort.



Full perimeter air flow — not just slits or holes.



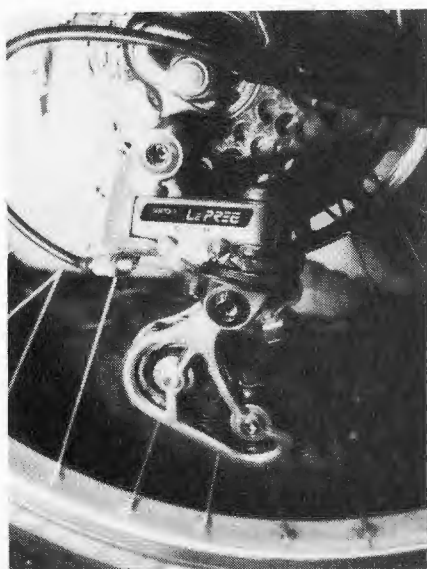
- Uniquely constructed, this helmet has a twin ABS shell with a thick layer of styrofoam in between, giving lightness without compromising strength.



Manufactured by Taranaki Equipment Distributors Ltd., New Zealand.  
Marketed in the USA under the Bailen label. Distributed in Australia by the World of Wheels group of specialist bicycle retailers.  
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# New Products and Ideas



## Three pulley derailleur

The SunTour Le Pre is a unique rear derailleur that brakes tradition with its three pulley pivoting cage. This unique design allows more chain to be wrapped up while preserving good chain tension. The trend for low low touring and mountain bike gears has created the need for this design but don't expect to be able to buy one

for your bike. Though the derailleur was manufactured under licence by SunTour the design was specially developed by Nishiki of Japan for use on their Repco/Nishiki Cresta touring bike. You have to buy the bike to get the derailleur.

## Bald is best?

If you have ever seen the tyres on a competition racing motorcycle you will have noticed the absence of a



tread pattern. Normal car tyres have a wide flat contact area which traps water so they need grooves to carry the water away and so gain better contact. The motorcyclist with tight cornering requirements needs maximum surface contact and the

grooves on the rounder cycle tyres reduce this vital contact.

Avocet of the USA have now released their FasGrip three ply clincher tyre and soon they will be available in this country. The company claims that their tyres give spectacular cornering performance. They maintain that as the rounded bicycle tyre displaces water naturally tread patterns only work against the rider in the rain trapping water and reducing effective contact.

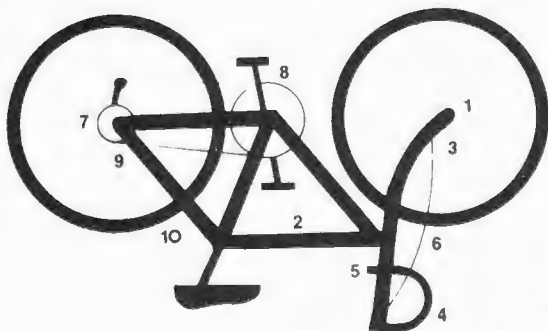
## Cycloid gear

Sugino have joined the egg/oval shaped chainwheel market with their range of non-round chainrings: the Cycloid Chainwheel.

According to an advance release by the company their competitor Shimano with its Biopace rings have opted for an increased power output for the rider. In contrast Sugino believe that the Cycloid chainrings best maintain a set output and eliminate wasted power. The Cycloid rings are oval shaped and allow a regular pedalling action maximising leg movement efficiency. The cycloid rings are most suitable for less powerful cyclists and offer comfortable non-tiring pedalling.

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8. Front Derailleur pivot points
9. Drive chain
10. Rear brake pivot points

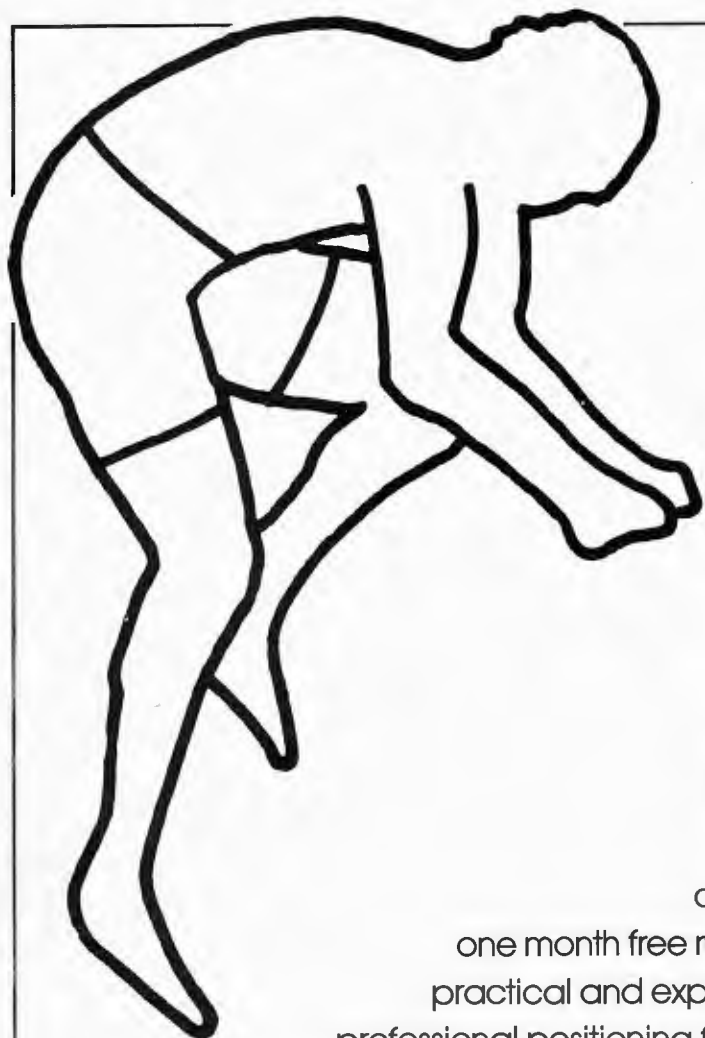


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# The longest and shortest day

**Ted Hodgson took up bicycle riding after a break of thirty years to improve his level of fitness following open heart surgery. This is his account of his first 200 km *Randonnee* with the Audax Australia Club. The ride was held on June 22 this year – the shortest day. It was to be Ted's longest day as he re-entered the world of the athlete.**

In my youth I rode in the U.K. mainly touring and time trailing, all using fixed wheel. Gears were for the sissies from the British League, in my neck of the woods anyway.

So when I started riding again in 1983, I started where I left off, in the early 50's. A bike with a relatively short wheel base and fixed wheels. Not that I was ever going to be in competition again! Just wheels. Then I heard of AUDAX, read an article in *Freewheeling* I think by Terry Gross and thought I could be interested in that kind of riding. But, they don't go down far enough for me! 200 kilometres seemed about as impossible as a trip to the moon. But I joined up anyway. A worth-while subscription to a worthy cause I thought!

Last year the club ran a 'Randonnee' from Geelong to Warrnambool, and back, starting at Johnsons' Park Geelong. I went down to meet the guys and ride a little way with them. They were powerful and to be honest, a bit quick for me. So I would ride a little longer and harder and see what was offering in 1985.

It seemed that in my mind I might finish up a "Gunna", then the Audax journal came out and in it a 'Randonnee' around the Bellerine Peninsula. Home ground! Minimum distance! The middle of winter, so no problems with over-heating. It seemed like now or never, so I talked it over with my family, some were for it; others against; for obvious reasons. My youngest son John said, "if you want to do it, I'll come with you dad", and from this small acceptance the idea grew. I increased my daily riding and we resurrected my son's old bike that he had ridden as a boy. Put on new wheels and tyres, mud-guards, a bidon and battery lighting, and we were ready to go. Not fit enough to go, but ready, and full of enthusiasm.

After a final preparation on Friday night packing sandwiches, oiling chains, and laying out clothing, a fitful



night's sleep; Saturday finally arrived. It was pouring down. I had made a deal with myself, that I wouldn't start in the rain. Anyway it was only 6 am.

Shower, shave, and breakfast, and all the last minute things, like filling bidons, thermos flasks etc. Andrew my number three son was going to act as our support vehicle, and he arrived with John at about 7.20 am.

We arrived at the start, outside Johnson's Park, near Geelong Railway station at about 7.45 am. We were greeted by Terry Gross, "The billies boiling, help yourself to a cuppa", was the cheerful welcome. Having never ridden before I went up and paid my dues and received a small card imprinted with Control '1', Control '2' etc, and the early and late arrival times against each control. This was accompanied by Route instructions which gave a blow by blow descrip-

tion of which direction to ride. A small map and distances between each port of call so that you could plan your ride, along with the location of the Controls. Part of the scheme of things is the sneaky 'secret control' to make sure that you do not stray from the straight and narrow. Provision is also made on the Brevet card for this. So much for the organisation.

The rain eased towards 8.0 am to a fine drizzle and we decided that we should at least start with wet-weather gear on and hope that it would clear. So at a couple of minutes past eight we finally decided to move. . . . Bade farewell to Andrew and arranged to meet him at the first control, Point Lonsdale, 65 km's down the road in 3 hours time. During our training we had adjusted our cadence and my one and only gear so that we rode at an average speed of 20 kilometres per

hour. It would be interesting to see how this would stand up for the real thing. I was riding a 67 inch fixed wheel and John a five speed cluster and double chain wheel ranging from 93" to 45" in ratios.

As we started to ride out of town, there was a construction worker standing at the side of the road who gave us a wave and a big cheesy grin. I wonder what was going through his mind? Two cyclists in the pouring rain riding out of town?

By the time we had reached the outskirts of Geelong the rain was easing slightly and we could see clear sky ahead. All the other entrants, only were ahead of us so we were the last cab off the rank, but not much concerned. It appears that when the weather is bad only the seasoned riders start, except for the greenhorns and there were three of us, Lynne from Knox Touring club, my son John and myself. With good weather conditions a bigger turnout could have been expected, I am told. So we rode on past the mountains of salt at Cheetham Salt Works climbing slowly with a tail wind behind us and a change of dry clothing and a hot cuppa waiting for us at the first control.

During my research for the ride I had read various articles about, food,

clothing and energy, not to mention the golden rules so well put by Paul de Vivie under his nom-de-plume "VELOCIO" which I list for the benefit of those who haven't read about him.

1. Few stops and short, so as not to lose your 'drive.
2. Eat little and often, eat before getting hungry, drink before you are thirsty.
3. Never ride until you are so tired that you cannot eat or sleep.
4. Put on extra clothing before feeling cold, take some off before getting hot.
5. Do not drink wine, eat meat or smoke, while in the saddle.
6. Never rush things, ride within yourself, particularly during the first few hours of a ride when you feel strong and feel tempted to force the pace.
7. Never pedal out of vanity.

I thought a reader might appreciate these rules because they did apply, and when they were broken, that was the beginning of the end. In a long ride, say a ride exceeding one hour's duration, then a rider should start feeding with both liquids and sustenance after about forty minutes, according to experts, which I am not. But I would go along with this. In old-fashioned parlance when riding

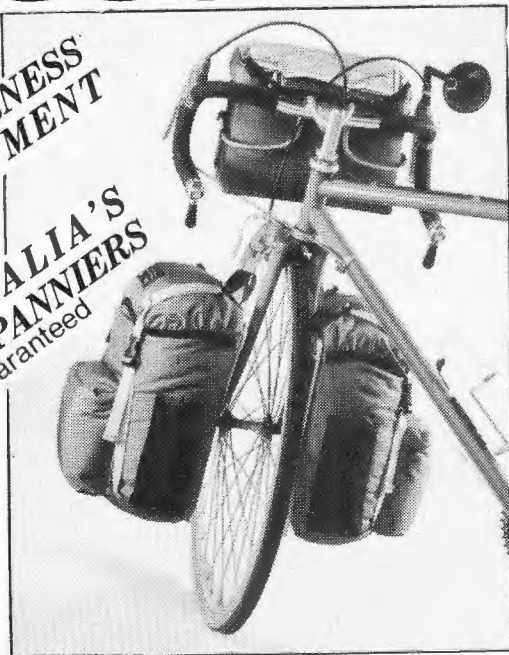
reasonably seriously you could expect to use between 400 and 600 calories per hour, so you don't have to be a mental giant to know you will finish up with *THE BONK*. This is a relatively new word to me, in the North of England it was called *THE KNOCK* and other riders I've talked to talk about going *FLAT*. They all mean the same thing; that is a complete lack of energy and the inability of your legs to exert any force on the pedals. This energy requirement is real and a rider's body needs to be trained to convert suitable food into energy on an almost continuous basis.

Some athletes practise Glycogen loading, which in basic terms means loading the blood stream with energy prior to an event, so that it's on tap when required for that final fling.

The principle applies to any rider who is undertaking a long distance ride. Food energy needs to be taken on board almost continuously in order to maintain blood sugar levels.

Lots of riders eat chocolate, fruit and pasta, or high energy foods which are carbohydrates and easily assimilated. Protein in the form of meat is hard for the body to convert and should be eaten after the event. So my food plan was to eat about 3000 calories during the event and use 1000

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calories from reserve which was my breakfast.

Another vital part to consider is the body's fluid balance. Depending upon weather conditions, you could expect to use anything up to half a litre of fluid per hour. Roughly one bidon. When using energy from the blood stream we need fluid to go with it, rather like the petrol and air fed through the carburettor in a motor car. One without the other and the motor peters out.

We also need to top up our cooling system as well, so we must make up for the loss of electrolytes through perspiration. The key ingredient being Potassium. I covered this area by using a mixture of orange juice, which is rich in Potassium, cordial, rich in sugar and mineral water in my bidon. Over the whole event I consumed about 2 litres, but this was along with at least six cups of tea at controls, but more about that later.

So we continued with tail wind and light rain, slowly rising towards Drysdale. The clouds were starting to separate a little and although by no stretch of the imagination could you even think that the sun would shine, somehow things looked brighter.

Over on our left we could see the You-Yangs appearing blue out of the

early morning gloom and ships riding majestically at anchor in Corio Bay awaiting a berth at the Grain Terminal, or one of the many other wharves around Geelong. The view as it unfolded was worth much more after it had been earned. By this time we were settling down to a steady ride and breathing deeply the cool fresh air. The biggest problem at this stage was running noses. Just before we reached Drysdale we saw the two riders ahead of us dismount and take off their wet weather gear, and we discussed our feelings on the decision. Quite a lot of condensation was beginning to form inside my jacket and John was having the same experience, and although the rain had now become intermittent, the problem remains of will I, or won't I, take off my coat? We reached Drysdale and the weather continued to improve so we stopped, had a drink from the bidon, stuffed a few toffees in our mouths and stowed our jackets in the saddle bags. Back in the saddle we pointed our wheels towards Portarlington with a magnificent view of Corio and Port Philip Bay and a down hill run from the Drysdale Hills to almost sea level.

I said to John, just Go! Go! Go! No use waiting for me. I was twiddling as fast as I could but he could slip into

tenth gear and leave me for dead. So we parted company on a temporary basis. I came round a corner on the outskirts of Portarlington and found John at the side of the road. Something had fallen off! A lesson which can be learned by all, is to fit accessories securely. This was continually reinforced during the ride. It was a lesson that I had learned during my training sessions on rough country roads.

On two occasions I have had battery light fly apart with vibration, and it's hard to find them again, particularly in the dark, without a light, so I tape my lights together. This has the advantage of keeping dust and water out as well. My bidon I use a spare toe clip strap around, so that if I hit a pot hole it doesn't bounce out of the cage. Pumps can be held in place with sticky tape. If any of these items came off during a steep descent they could cause a mishap.

John fell into a trap of assuming that his bidon cage was secure, which it was as long as he didn't hit a pot hole at speed. No harm done but a vital lesson learned. Later on he also lost his pump which was duly taped onto his machine.

Time to get the route map out and check which way to go and find our way out of Portarlington. The rain had

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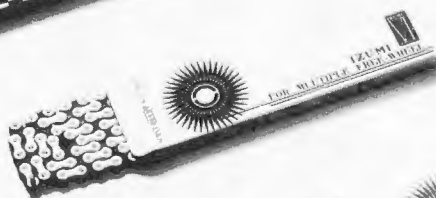


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now stopped completely and we happily navigated our way out of Portarlinton and headed for Indented Head. The road headed inland slightly and it still felt like a downhill run.

Time was slipping away and so were the kilometres as we ticked along. A lot of the more experienced and better equipped riders had computers which registered average speed etc, but we were just using the good old fashioned cyclometer on the front wheel, \$2.00 from K-Mart.

It was better than no means of measuring distance anyway. A humorous side to this was that John had fitted one to his bike also, but he had done it in a great hurry the night before, throwing the instructions to one side, everybody knows how to fit a cyclometer! It went backwards. By the time we had finished he had travelled minus two hundred kilometres. That's got to be the very first negative Randonnee.

Between Indented Head and St. Leonards we came around a bend and a car was parked at the side of the road with a sign hanging down behind the boot. "AUDAX", we immediately pricked up. Ha! this must be one of these secret controls and we were not wrong. We produced our event card which Stan the scrutineer stamped and signed but did not enter a time. This stop was conveniently located at a cafe but we elected to ride on munching chocolate and drinking from our bidons.

The interesting side of the journey so far was that we had been riding for one hour and fifty five minutes and the distance covered a mere 39 kilometres but spot-on as far as I was concerned. Obviously our pace was as planned at this stage. The two riders who were ahead of us. Lynne and David had stopped for a Kit-Kat and so for the first time we weren't last.

We then turned inland from St. Leonards and started a long, slow climb. Probably what made it worse was that by this time we were pointing in a southerly direction so we also had a head wind.

After we had reached the junction of Portarlinton and Queenscliff road and turned towards Point Lonsdale the wind would be on our side and the ride a long downhill run to the next control. With a large black cloud drifting towards us and fine rain starting to fall, shall we or shan't we! John said that he was damp enough anyway so we popped more chocolate into our mouths and kept on riding.

We were wearing track suit pants, which worked out quite well, tee shirt covered by a flannelette shirt and a heavy jumper. At no time during the ride was I too hot and the open

clothing remained relatively perspiration free.

The light shower which we experienced in an approach to Point Lonsdale also dried out as we rode along without causing us much in the way of discomfort. The only problem I had was wiping my spectacles. I haven't found a way around that problem yet!

As we coasted into our first real control, Andrew was waiting with some sandwiches and Terry also with the billy boiling. Tea, coffee, soup, cake and biscuits. A welcome sight in a most beautiful spot overlooking the rip. We could see a Tasmania Ferry on its way out, and other ships in the distance.

Terry stamped our event cards and wrote in the time. Lynne and David had caught up with us just as we were riding in towards the control. The distance now 65 kilometres, time taken 3 hours and 15 minutes. Not a world land speed record, but if we could keep it up, a speed which could earn our first brevet.

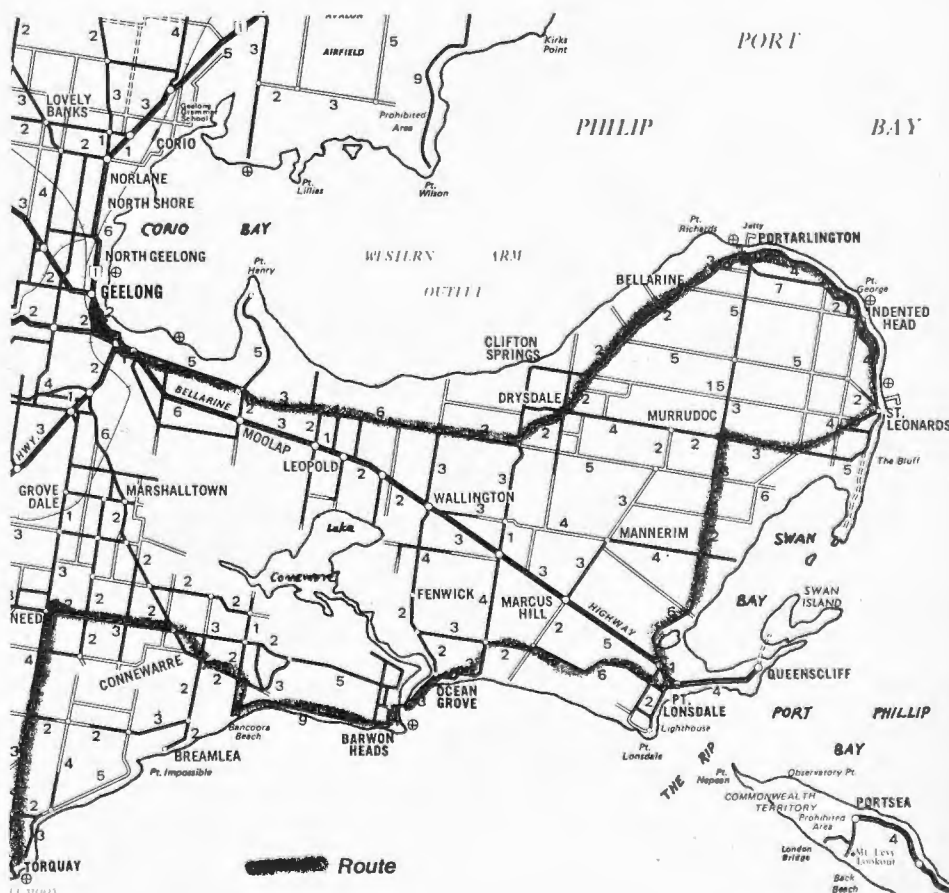
We decided to eat big and consumed sandwiches and coffee. A half hour break and we went off for Ocean Grove and the second leg of the Randonnee.

Again we were butting into a headwind and climbing. John's gears were working beautifully and I was starting to struggle a little with my fixed

wheel, but eventually we reached Ocean Grove, and started the long descent to Barwon Heads. This was where we both started to feel some pain in our legs. Up till now the longest ride I had undertaken had been about 60 kilometres and John a little less so we had both already passed our personal best at Point Lonsdale. The wind was also draining our energy fairly quickly, so we continued to eat chocolate.

On the downgrade to Barwon Heads John went ahead and I twiddled my way through the township and down past the caravan parks in the sand dunes to the sea again, and we started the long expanded leg into the wind to Mount Duneed. The pain in our thighs was intense and we rode bit by bit, eventually walking up the last 200 metres to the road junction to Torquay. The only carrot we had to dangle in front of our eyes at this stage was Torquay is halfway home and from that time on it gets less and less. Also all that beautiful wind on the way back. We would fly!

Eventually we arrived at Torquay for a very welcome lunch break. Andrew was there waiting with my wife June, and Rosemary my daughter, John's wife and children were there also, and so we rode in like a couple of conquering heroes. I don't think anyone could have imagined the pain barrier which we both rode through.



A half hour break, and a fond farewell and a tummy full of lunch saw the count-down started again. Somehow Lynne and David who had gone ahead of us out of Barwon Heads came in behind us, it was like a devil take the hindmost. It must have been the slowest pursuit ever.

Our time to Torquay was about five hours and thirty minutes for one hundred and four kilometres. Still, not bad especially after the hard time we had gone through to Mt. Duneed.

Well we didn't exactly fly but were a lot more confident than we had been, Mount Duneed, Barwon Heads. Where had the magnificent tail wind gone? It seemed to have evaporated and gone more south.

The climb to Ocean Grove started to test our legs again and we got off and walked a couple of steep pinches. John started to feel some pain in his knee, an old football injury, but we plodded on and started on the drop down into Pt. Lonsdale once more. This Control was flashing like a neon sign in our minds "only 65 to go". By the time we reached Point Lonsdale John's knee had reached a stage where he couldn't really put any pressure onto it.

I had a small first-aid kit in my saddlebag but no crepe bandages, which is what we really needed. Next time!

It is amazing how you can try to anticipate all eventualities and fail over some small detail.

Andrew carried spare wheels, clothing and food. I carried some food, first aid kit, tools, spare inner tube etc, but still not enough. The 'maestro' Terry came to the rescue; he came up with a crepe bandage. So we had hot drinks, some fruit cake but I couldn't eat and John either, a problem for which we would pay later.

Our time at this stage was excellent by our humble standards. We had travelled one hundred and forty kilometres in eight and one half hours of which one hour had been taken up with rest periods, so our average was still looking good. We had five and a half hours left to cover the remaining 65 "k's". Lynne and David arrived after us at Point Lonsdale after overtaking us before Barwon Heads, and so we left before them again!!!

As we were settling in again and winding our way out of Point Lonsdale a small boy on a B.M.X. caught sight of us and proceeded to burn us off!! We waved, told him how good he was, we were certainly no competition for this enthusiast, who knows he may be a Randonneur of the future! Lights on and the slow climb up the Queenscliffe, Portarlington road and down to St. Leonards. What should have been a tail wind became a head wind but fortunately it was downhill. Then we decided to start eating our last bar of chocolate. It wasn't there! Ah well! press on.

Stan was waiting at the same place with his secret control which was what we expected, and so was Andrew, and my daughter Rosemary who had now been completely caught up in the spirit of the event, although upon reflection it's reasonably easy to be a bold spectator.

Six in the evening forty to go! The final leg was to prove to be the toughest, we rode into Portarlington not too badly, but the climb to Lonsdale, a long long drag was a killer. The missed meal at Point Lonsdale, and the elusive chocolate bar put us both into an energy deficient situation.

We had *THE BONK* and so we struggled, walked, rode, walked until we could see the lights of Geelong from the heights of Drysdale. It took two hours to ride the last 20 k's, but we made it.

A welcome, and you guessed it Terry's billy was boiling. We handed in our brevet cards and John said "Never again Dad".

So our first Randonnee was completed, yes we were last. David and Lynne beat us by about ten minutes.

Funny thing about it all is we are now planning the next one! Andrew will ride this time and John and I will go along for the ride!

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# *Back to Newnes – a fat-tyre adventure*

**The Blue Mountains area of NSW has many tracks and trails to challenge the mountain bike rider. One of the most interesting is the route to the old shale oil mining town of Newnes which follows an abandoned railway line. Warren Salomon visited the area on skinny tyres back in 1980. The journey this time was made on fat tyres.**

It's physical isolation probably keeps Newnes off the well worn tourist track. Situated on the western edge of the sandstone plateau that is the Blue Mountains Range what is left of the old shale mining town nestles beneath the towering sandstone walls of the Wolgan Valley and turns its back on the march of human progress. Newnes has had its day but it was once this country's largest industrial installation.

The works were built to serve a different era.

The age of the automobile was still in the future when the Commonwealth Oil Corporation was floated on the London Stock Exchange with the purpose of

carrying out extensive shale oil mining and processing operations in the Wolgan Valley of New South Wales. A site was chosen adjacent to the rich deposits and operations began in 1903.

In order to transport the products of this large mining operation to Sydney and beyond a standard gauge railway line was constructed from Newnes to the main Western Railway line just north of Bell. The line was built through rugged country and rose some 650 metres from the valley floor to the top of the range. To keep construction costs down tight curves and steep grades (1 in 25) were used. The 51 km of track was built in a quick thirteen months and contains two tunnels one which has

now been named "The Glow Worm Tunnel" after its new inhabitants.

The old line traverses some of the most impressive sandstone george country in the Blue Mountains region. Though the Wolgan Valley Railway was built to 'pioneer standards' the overall quality of the construction was good. This is in evidence today for even though the line was dismantled in the early 1930's much of the original formation remains and can be followed on foot or by bicycle.

**Above:** On from the Glow Worm Tunnel is the biggest washaway. Here the old embankment has been completely removed by successive floods. What remains are fallen logs, rocks and ditches to make the going tough.







Photograph opposite by Jim Smith. Bells Grotto at the Newnes end of the Glow Worm Tunnel makes a wonderful campsite once space can be found under the giant tree fern fronds and away from the constantly dripping water. Photo this page by Justin Bridgeman. Emerging from the first tunnel on the way down to Newnes. This tunnel can be ridden provided you have lights.

I first visited the area in 1980 shortly after Jim Smith published his wonderful little book *The Blue Mountains - A guide for Bicyclists* which is now unfortunately out of print. Jim introduced the two day ride (Bell to

the Glow Worm Tunnel and back) as a classic trip. It's that and more.

My first trip was on a standard skinny tyred touring bike and I can vividly remember the fun we had as my companions and I were brought undone by the many sandy patches that litter the road from Bell to the first tunnel but that's a different story - this time we sported fat wheels and the going was made a lot easier.

Our journey to follow the old railway line to Newnes began with another rail journey. We knew of the NSW State Rail Authority's indifference to travellers with bicycles but we were not prepared for a journey on one of the newer double decker inter-urban electric trains from Sydney up the mountains to Bell. These trains have no room in the guard's compartment so you have to stand with your bike in the vestibule area adjacent to the carriage doors waiting to move it when passengers wanted to pass through to the next carriage.

On the return journey we wisened up and found that the bikes could be stood up on their back wheels and strapped into an unused baggage alcove. I have been since informed that the SRA may install hooks and remove the shelves in the alcoves so that bikes may be reasonably accommodated on this type of train.

Bell is an unattended station so we had to tell the guard to let us off there. A warm winter sun greeted us at the station for the start of our three day journey. We began by riding back up the main road to Bell for breakfast. Bell is now a small collection of houses surrounding the road intersection and has only one shop/service station serving basic meals, lollies, chocolates and drinks but no groceries. The nearest main supply point is Mt Victoria 10 km back down the line or Lithgow 19 km on and down off the range.

My companions on this trip were Abe and Justin both fourteen and looking forward to their first overnight fat tyred adventure. From Bell we rode back past the station and on towards Lithgow. The road is wide and fast here and we kept our tyres inflated hard to reduce our rolling resistance until we reached dirt road. Shortly after crossing Dhargan's Creek and the railway line we came to the turn-off to the Clarence Colliery. Here we left the main road and headed up the bitumen the short

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distance to the inauspicious start of Jim Smith's 'classic'.

Jim in his book suggests starting the ride from the dirt road which follows the railway line north to the Clarence Colliery. This is very difficult to do now days as the coal mines have over run the area and a better beginning is made off the main road as described above. The actual start of the ride is still as Jim described in his book. As the road begins to climb up the hill you will notice a rough track heading up the side of the cutting wall to the left(north). This point is marked by an old broken drainage pipe towards the top of the cutting wall. Walk or ride your bike up this track and you enter another world.

For the next few kilometres the road travels through the spectacular old cuttings of the original Great Western Railway Line which were bypassed early this century. The road is generally impassable to motor vehicles up the track from the colliery road but once into the cuttings there is evidence of tourist vehicles using the road from further on. Few people know of this road so you are unlikely to strike vehicles along here.

At the timber mill turn right and begin the long slow climb up onto the ridge to a T-junction in the road. Along here you will encounter a gravel works which is passed on your right and the large scar of power line clearings which you eventually leave behind you. Sign posts are a rare commodity indeed on this ride so the Wallerawang 1:100,000 Natmap sheet will help you keep an overall perspective. At the T-intersection turn right. The left hand road goes to Lithgow via a back way and provides an alternative to Bell as a starting or finishing point for this ride.

After the intersection the first pine plantations of the Newnes State Forest are passed on the right. The old railway bed has been obliterated and the road through to the end of the pine plantations follows a different (though roughly parallel) course. Along here you will be able to make out the odd embankment or cutting off to the side. If it is dry expect many unseen sandy patches on this road. If it is wet expect mud! On this trip we had both as it started to rain on the second day.

Just before the end of the pine plantations the present day road joins the old rail bed as it comes in from the west. From here on the ride gets really interesting.

We paused for lunch at the edge of the pine trees and felt pleased with the time taken so far. The road had only been graded recently which made going a little slower but the fat tyres amply compensated comfort for lack of speed. I reflected on the last time I had travelled this road. On skinny tyres



The Wolgan Valley railway as it was. c 1910. As the line emerges from Penrose Gorge it follows underneath tall cliffs for a kilometer or so. This photo from an informative booklet *The Wolgan Valley Railway - Its Construction* by Henry Deane and published by the Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW). This book is recommended for anyone interested in this area's history.

we had found the sandy road hard going. The same distance had taken much longer to travel and with much greater effort.

What used to be called Deane's Siding (named after the engineer in charge of the line's construction) marks the start of the actual descent into the Wolgan Valley. Its hard to describe the place as there is nothing left of the original siding and its buildings. There is a track off to the right here on the start of a left hand bend following a 500 metre straight flat section. Further on there is another road forking off to the right. This is the start of the Old Coach Road which was to be our return route up from the valley but more of that later.

From Deane's Siding the old line begins to drop gradually at first and then much steeper as the forest opens up to reveal the valley of Tunnel Creek and the Wolgan Valley proper further north. The road surface along here is good but there are often drainage ruts criss crossing the white hard-packed surface.

The sandstone in this area has been worn by the elements into fascinating honeycombed shapes. Strange monolithic formations dot the valley side as the old rail bed descends towards the first tunnel. This tunnel is only 110 metres in length and can be ridden with lights. Walking is recommended as there are ruts on the tunnel floor which make riding hazardous. Its a funny feeling to be riding along one sunny winter afternoon and find that you suddenly need torches to find your way.

Back in the sun again the rail road loops back on its self and descends through the rock walls to the head of Penrose Gorge. A barrier has been erected to announce the fact that you are now in Wollemi National Park. The road here is slightly washed away but is still passable to bikes. A short distance further on however its a different story.

Between the two tunnels there are two washaways. The first is relatively easy to negotiate but the second requires a serious effort to overcome.

At the second we began by removing front and rear pannier bags from our machines and then carried bike and bags in two loads down the rough foot track to the creek bed. It became obvious to us at this point that the loading and unloading of the bags on to the bikes was going to take a lot of extra time. We eventually devised a method on the more difficult washaways where we would all walk (or carry) each loaded bike through one at a time.

From the creek bed we picked our way down stream over the tonnes of earth washed out from the original embankment to reach the line lower down. This neatly avoided the climb



back up to the top of the embankment. If only the others were as easy.

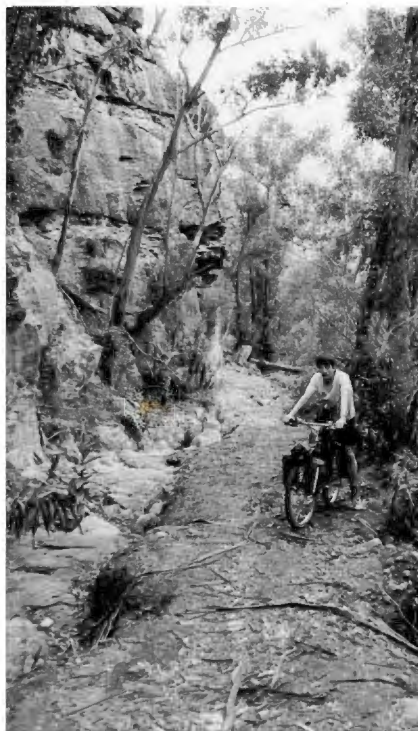
When the original line was built the many earth embankments were properly drained and well maintained. With time and lack of maintenance some of the drainage pipes under the embankments have become blocked and eventually a number of the more vulnerable earth formations have become washed away in floods. After the first washaway the road crosses the creek on top of a high embankment which has collected a small lake above it. The drain is obviously blocked and in years to come will possibly result in the biggest washaway on the entire route.

Not far from the second washaway is the Glow Worm Tunnel. There is flat ground for camping at either end of the tunnel. We chose to wheel our laden bikes through the badly washed away tunnel and set up camp in Bells Grotto among the tree ferns.

Bells Grotto is the name given to the small canyon which begins near the upper portal of the Glow Worm Tunnel and carries Tunnel creek through to the Wolgan Valley. At the lower portal the canyon wall overhangs the remnants of the track bed and water flows constantly over its brow. With our tent perched comfortably between the gigantic fronds of the tree ferns we cooked and ate a hearty meal. The water in the main creek was discoloured by iron oxide deposits in the sandstone so we collected water from the dripping canyon roof. That night the sound of falling water in the Grotto increased as rain began to fall.

By the end of breakfast the sky above us was showing patches of blue and the sun shone for an hour or two. The plan today was to ride on to Newnes knowing full well that the biggest washaways lay in our path. But first we had to explore the gorgeous countryside surrounding the Glow Worm Tunnel. From the lower portal we followed the creek up through the narrowing canyon to emerge above the upper portal. To complete the round trip we reentered the tunnel and continued down to our loaded bikes. To add a bit of excitement to this journey we had left our torches back with the bikes.

Once inside the tunnel the going is very easy. The main channel carrying water through is on the left hand side so we kept to the right and felt the wall with our hands. The tunnel is just over four hundred metres long and curves to the left so that at least half of the distance is in pitch blackness. By not using torches we allowed our eyes to become fully accustomed to the dark and could gauge the general direction of the tunnel by the lights of the glow worms above us. These clever little



Pushing up the old coach road on the way out of the Wolgan Valley. This road is no longer passable for vehicles but is fine for mountain bikes.

creatures have turned this place into a perpetual starry sky.

There are a few puddles here and there along the way but when we finally emerged into the light of day the only 'damage' we had suffered was a blackened right hand each from the soot covered tunnel wall.

After an early lunch we pushed on towards Newnes.

Below the Glow Worm Tunnel the going gets really tough. Since the closing of the line the creek in flood has scoured out almost all of the earth works in the lower part of the canyon. This two hundred metre section resembles a huge demolition site littered with fallen trees huge boulders and steep slippery foot tracks. For a walker this section is bearable; for a mountain biker it becomes a bit of an ordeal.

We had to scout out a path through this section before we walked the bikes through one at a time. The last section involved lifting the bikes over a one metre high fallen log followed by a very steep uphill section that required our combined strength to push and shove each bike to the top.

Once we were back onto the old track-bed the washaways were soon forgotten. The old right of way along this section emerges from the canyon of Tunnel Creek and follows along the base of the Wolgan Valley cliffs. This is definitely the most spectacular section of the entire journey. Saplings have grown across the old rail bed and a narrow walkers track, just rideable,

picks its way through the bush. Out to the north the impressive walls of the Wolgan Valley stretch out of sight and up above sharp angular sandstone juts out into space.

Along this section there is much evidence of the heavy engineering works that were needed to construct the railway. Workers were suspended by ropes from above so they could drill holes into the rock for blasting. Unfortunately the ravages of time have produced at least three bad washaways and rock falls on this section. One of these requires extreme caution as the steep slope falls away quickly and fallen logs add to the difficulty.

But it's worth it.

All along the track falls at its uniform 1:25 grade until the road up from the valley floor is reached. Across the road the old line continues on through a gate. It is possible to follow the line through to Newnes but the washaways further on are massive. There are at least three major obstructions.

It is best to turn left here and follow the track down past the old colliery site to the road in the bottom of the valley. The road upward to the right at this point is the Old Coach Road and would be our route out of the valley tomorrow.

Once on the valley road it seems only a short ride to the Newnes Hotel. This is the only building remaining from the original town of 3,000 people. The hotel stocks a limited supply of beer and spirits and a few groceries. We were lucky and bought metho for our Trangia stove there but don't expect to buy any grocery item unless you ring them in advance.

There is a large National Park camping and picnic ground nearby and further on across the river ford are the ruins of the once extensive Shale Works. We camped on a wonderful grassy area across the river near what was once the town sports ground surrounded on all sides by huge sandstone cliffs. Newnes is a truly magnificent location.

The next morning we rode downstream to the old works and rode our unladen bikes through the extensive ruins. Bricks are piled up everywhere and there is little remaining of the numerous buildings, tanks and retorts which once littered the site. What has not been destroyed by the demolishers ball has been reclaimed by the bush. As one stands among the trees it is hard to imagine that the area was once totally cleared to comply with a fire insurance order. A huge brick retaining wall further up from the site of the retorts (which extracted the oil from the rock) and the beehive coke ovens are all that remain intact. The rest was ruthlessly destroyed by the original owners.

Newnes today has assumed a timeless quality. The works area is now within the bounds of Wollemi National Park and left to decay in dignity.

After lunch we packed and headed back up the valley in misty rain. Up above us the tops of the cliffs were obscured by cloud. Before long we would be likewise. We rejoined the old colliery road and slogged up the steep rocky track to the old rail line crossing and the start of the Old Coach Road. This road has been closed to vehicles for a number of years and was once the route of a petrol pipe line from Newnes Junction near Bell to Glen Davis via Newnes. The town of Glen Davis one valley to the north had flourished briefly in the 40's and 50's in much the same way as Newnes had in the early part of this century.

The Old Coach Road served as the only trafficable road out of the valley in the days of the railway line. Today it is still passable to mountain bikes but not much else. It is very steep and winds up into a small gorge on its way onto the ridge south of Tunnel Creek. Water is scarce along this road though there is a small creek off to the south just before the locked gate.

The gate is located in a small cutting about two thirds of the way up onto the

ridge. There is no way around it and our bikes had to be unloaded and passed over the top. From here the road climbs at an easier grade up onto the lightly forested ridge with spectacular views away to the north overlooking the valley of Tunnel Creek and the old railway line. Prospects for water and suitable campsites in the area looked poor indeed so we pushed upward into the drizzle and failing light towards Deane Siding.

My research of the old railway line had produced evidence of a small dam on a swampy creek to the north of Deane's Siding. From here water was pumped to tanks at the siding for the steam locomotives. The CMA 1:25,000 map showed a road branching off to the left about a kilometre before the old railway was reached. This seemed to lead to the site of the old dam. We would surely find water and a campsite there.

We reached the turnoff just before dark and descended the track to the creek in failing light. The creek was flowing and the surrounding area had been bulldozed sometime in the past few months but there was ample space for our tent and we were so tired.

In spite of the damp conditions we managed to find enough standing timber to light a cheery fire while dinner cooked nearby on the stove.

Light rain fell all night not that we cared.

Our final day's travel lacked the zest of the previous days. We were heading home now: the interesting parts were behind us ahead was a long slow (and wet) climb back to the top of the range followed by a quick downhill run to Lithgow. After the rain of the past 24 hours the newly graded road turned to mush and some difficult sections dragged on for half a kilometre or so.

We lunched in the old pine trees near what was once called the Summit for this was the high point of the railway line. Some trail bike riders were shattering the peace up and down the road. We sipped hot tea and sprawled on the pine needles. Why does it have to end?

From the Summit it is an easy run down to Lithgow at a much lower elevation than Bell. The road straight ahead is taken at the T-junction and after a blistering descent on black gravel road the outskirts of Lithgow are reached.

The railway staff were indifferent to our bike storage problems. By this time however we had figured out the best way to fix and store our machines. We were back in civilization once again. What a pity.

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	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	30	32	34	36	38
58	137	126	116	108	101	94	89	84	79	75	72	69	66	63	60	58	56	54	50	47	44	42	40
56	132	121	112	104	97	91	86	81	77	73	69	66	63	61	58	56	54	52	49	46	43	40	38
55	130	119	110	102	95	89	84	79	75	72	68	65	62	60	57	55	53	51	48	45	42	40	38
54	128	117	108	100	94	88	83	78	74	70	67	64	61	59	56	54	52	50	47	44	41	39	37
53	125	115	106	98	92	86	81	77	73	69	66	63	60	57	55	53	51	49	46	43	41	38	36
52	123	113	104	97	90	85	80	75	71	68	64	61	59	56	54	52	50	48	45	42	40	38	36
51	121	111	102	95	88	83	78	74	70	66	63	60	58	55	53	51	49	47	44	41	39	37	35
50	118	108	100	93	87	81	76	72	68	65	62	59	57	54	52	50	48	46	43	41	38	36	34
49	116	106	98	91	85	80	75	71	67	64	61	58	55	53	51	49	47	46	42	40	37	35	34
48	113	104	96	89	83	78	73	69	66	62	59	57	54	52	50	48	46	45	42	39	37	35	33
47	111	102	94	87	81	76	72	68	64	61	58	56	53	51	49	47	45	44	41	38	36	34	32
46	109	100	92	85	80	75	70	66	63	60	57	54	52	50	48	46	44	43	40	37	35	33	31
45	106	98	90	84	78	73	69	65	62	59	56	53	51	49	47	45	43	42	39	37	34	33	31
44	104	95	88	82	76	72	67	64	60	57	54	52	50	48	46	44	42	41	38	36	34	32	30
43	102	93	86	80	75	70	66	62	59	56	53	51	49	47	45	43	41	40	37	35	33	31	29
42	99	91	84	78	73	68	64	61	57	55	52	50	47	46	44	42	40	39	36	34	32	30	29
41	97	89	82	76	71	67	63	59	56	53	51	48	46	44	43	41	39	38	36	33	31	30	28
40	95	87	80	74	69	65	61	58	55	52	50	47	45	43	42	40	39	37	35	33	31	29	27
39	92	85	78	72	68	63	60	56	53	51	48	46	44	42	41	39	38	36	34	32	30	28	27
38	90	82	76	71	66	62	58	55	52	49	47	45	43	41	40	38	37	35	33	31	29	27	26
36	85	78	72	67	62	59	55	52	49	47	45	43	41	39	37	36	35	33	31	29	28	26	25
34	80	74	68	63	59	55	52	49	47	44	42	40	38	37	35	34	33	32	29	28	26	25	23
32	76	69	64	59	55	52	49	46	44	42	40	38	36	35	33	32	31	30	28	26	24	23	22
30	71	65	60	56	52	49	46	43	41	39	37	35	34	33	31	30	29	28	26	24	23	22	21
28	66	61	56	52	49	46	43	40	38	36	35	33	32	30	29	28	27	26	24	23	21	20	19
26	61	56	52	48	45	42	40	38	36	34	32	31	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	21	20	19	18
24	57	52	48	45	42	39	37	35	33	31	30	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	18	17	16

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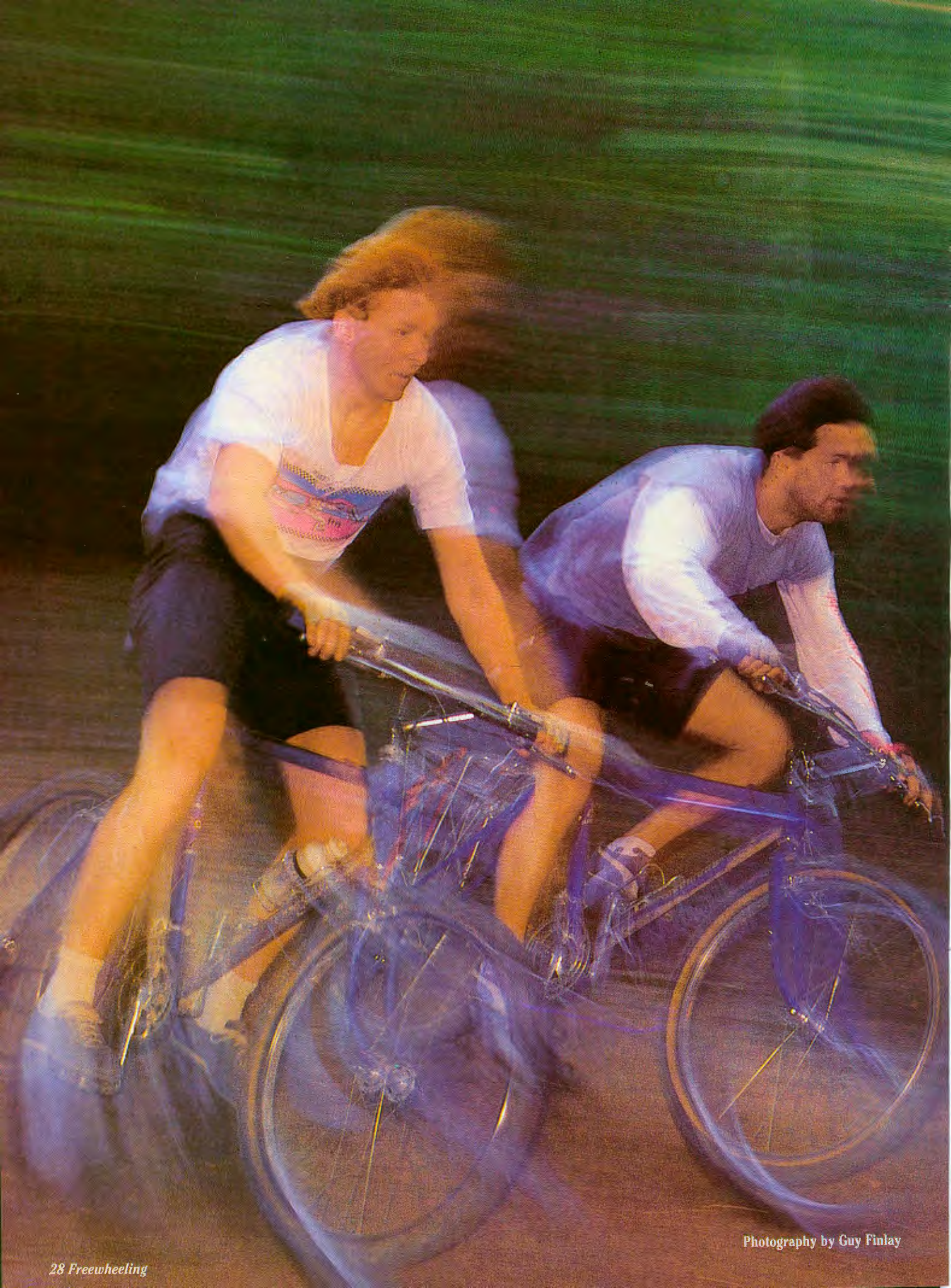
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Photography by Guy Finlay





# *Mountain bikes for everyone – the 1985/6 market survey.*

**In this, our second look at the mountain bike market, we survey the twenty nine models currently on sale across the land.**

We are only into the second summer of mountain bike sales and already Australians are being faced with a tyranny of choice. With 29 models available (some manufacturers have up to four each) the decision of which bike to buy is not being made any easier. In this survey we have tried to explain the equipment that makes up these machines. With around eighteen categories of componentry it is any wonder that no two bikes are alike though some come close in a majority of areas.

In the following text we deal with each component item in turn. You should refer to the chart for detail information on the individual machines. Many of these have been previously reviewed in *Freewheeling* and an index of these reviews where they apply to current models is found at the conclusion of this survey.

At the end of this special mountain bike feature we also present individual bike reviews of six new models not previously tested.

## *Price and value for money*

The chart which accompanys this survey lists the various bikes in ascending price order. It is generally true of all bikes that the more expensive models offer a higher quality of parts and finish. This is certainly true with mountain bikes.

There are broad categories which generally represent a different level of quality and class of componentry used. They are as follows: up to \$500 – usually steel components are used throughout and though the finish is generally good the overall weight of these bikes is far greater than those in the other two categories; \$500 to \$700 – this category offers good quality (mostly alloy) equipment and a lightweight frame; over \$700 – Bikes in this high quality range offer the finest lightweight frames and state of the art componentry. According to the bicycle industry this price range has so far sold surprisingly well and the competition is hot between the four contenders.

When designing a bike a manufacturer is always mindful of the price range the bike will slot into. Often there are trade-offs. For example if one particular model has a lightweight chrome moly frame (at additional cost) the maker will quite often reduce the quality of other componentry to keep the total price below a certain level. Brakes and pedals are usually sacrificed but more often than not the frame itself, because of its large component cost, is of lower quality than the overall componentry.

One final word about price: All prices quoted are average recommended retail prices as of the beginning of October 1985. The matter doesn't rest there as often dealers will have their own retail price above or below the average. You may find that as the Australian dollar exchange rate fluctuates prices in the new year may rise or even fall. Shop around by all means but remember that the best deal is found with the specialist bicycle retailer who offers the best service and

back up. Forget the chain store mountain bikes: the ones we've seen are not worth considering.

## Frames and tubing

All mountain bikes use oversize tubing and can be either lugless or lugged construction. With modern TIG welding techniques lugless frames can be very strong. The larger tube diameters adds to the rigidity of these types.

Lugged frames are generally more rigid and are used with more esoteric types of lightweight tubing such as the triple butted chrome moly on the Clamont Coronet or the taper butted Tange Infinity tubing on the Woolys Ultimate. Often only the main tubes will be chrome moly with the chain and seat stays high tensile steel. This adds slightly to the weight.

Fork blades can be either chrome moly, mangalloy, or steel in varying grades. The better quality frames have cast fork tips and fork crown.

Check the brazed-on fittings you will need. In this dry country at least two waterbottles should be carried on longer trips. Rack mounts can often be useless if the type of rack you buy later does not fit. Avoid low rider front racks for off-road conditions as your bags will snag on every rock and shrub. If you use your MTB for dirt and sealed road touring the low rider rack may suit you fine.

The headsets fitted to almost all of the bikes were steel. Alloy headsets have steel inserts and have to be occasionally checked for signs of fatigue. Generally the quality of this component matched the overall quality of the bike it was fitted to.

Above all the frame is the most important component to consider. Its easy to upgrade to say, better quality pedals, but not so easy to swap the frame over. A good lightweight frame can also dramatically reduce the overall feel and performance of the machine so choose carefully with this major component. Because of the higher bottom bracket height you will generally need a frame size 5 cm smaller than your normal street bike size. If you presently ride a 58 cm road bike your optimum mountain bike size will need to be about 53 cm give or take a centimetre. Oh yes, parts of the bike industry still have not metricated so please consult our conversion chart if you are in doubt.

## Crankset and gear changers

The most popular type of chainwheel set used was the Sugino TGT alloy triple. Standard crank lengths (170mm) are preferred though longer legged people may find longer crank arms more efficient to use.

Make and model	Price	Sizes in cm	Frame tubing	Brazed-on fittings	Headset	Crankset	Derailleurs
Raleigh Yukon	299	56	Lugless steel	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	SR alloy with steel rings Sizes 52-40	SunTour Honor
Repco Skyline	345	46 53 58	Lugless steel	One water bottle Brake cable guides	Steel	SR-3R alloy double with steel rings Sizes 48-36	Front SunTour Mountech Rear SunTour ARGT
Apollo Kosciuszko	349	49 56 Mixte frame 49	Lugless Fernco high tensile steel	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	SR alloy triple steel rings 50-44-36	Front SunTour Spirit Rear SunTour AR GT
Ricardo Bushbike	350	53 58	Lugged high tensile 1021 Australian steel	Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MA 60	Sugino alloy triple steel rings Sizes 48-42-34	Front Shimano AL 11 Rear Shimano RS GT
Malvern Star Torego	357	50 56	Lugless steel	Two water bottles Strap mounts Brake and gear	Steel	SR alloy/steel Ring size 46	Shimano RS
Gemini Galaxy	360	21 23	Lugless chrome moly down tube Other tubes high tensile steel	One waterbottle Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	Alun alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-26	Lubao alloy
Centurion MTB 15-speed	375	53 58	Lugless high tensile steel tubing	One water bottle Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	Alun alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-28	SunTour AG Tech
Southern Cross Manly 10 MTB	389	46 Womens frame	Lugless high tensile steel	One water bottle Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	SR Custom alloy double Ring sizes 52-40	Shimano Z series
Southern Cross Decathlon II	399	46 58	Lugless high tensile steel	One water bottle Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	SR alloy triple Ring sizes 52-44-34	Shimano Z series
Malvern Star Bogart/Bacall	399	46 Bacall mixte 46	Lugged high tensile steel	One water bottle Brake cable guides	Steel	SR alloy double with steel rings Sizes 50-42	Shimano Z series
Graecross Pathfinder	432	50 56	Lugless high tensile steel	One waterbottle Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	Aero alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-26	SunTour AG
Malvern Star Trailrider	469	53 58	Lugless triple butted chrome moly tubing	Two water bottles Strap mounts Brake and gear	Steel	SR alloy with steel rings sizes 52-42	Shimano RS
Europe MTB 10-speed	475	52 57	Lugless PG chrome moly	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	Sugino IDOL alloy Ring sizes 52-42	SunTour Seven GT
Clamont Range Runner	495	44 46 53 58 cm	Lugged double butted chrome moly all tubes	One waterbottle Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MA 60 steel	SR CX Alloy double 175mm Ring sizes 50-36 or 50-34	Shimano Z series alloy F&R
Apollo Himalaya	499	49 57	Lugless chrome moly tubing 3 main tubes	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Steel Tange MX 600	SR FXC -T310 alloy triple Ring sizes 48-40-34	SunTour Mountech
Hillman MTB	565	49 54 59	Lugged Kuwahara chrome moly PG all tubes	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange Falcon	Sugino TGT Alloy triple Ring sizes 48-44-24	SunTour Mountech F&R
Europa MTB 15-speed	565	52 57	Lugless PG chrome moly	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Steel	Sugino TGT alloy triple Ring sizes 48-38-28	SunTour AG
Focus MB 400	585	47 51 56	Lugged Tange Chrome moly main tubes Mangalloy forks	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MA 40	Tourney GS alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-28	SunTour Mountech
Repco Sierra	599	46 53	Lugless chrome moly all tubes & fork	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange Falcon	Sugino TGT alloy triple Ring sizes 48-38-28	SunTour Mountech
Graecross Jackaroo	599	50 53 58	Lugged Mangalloy double butted	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MA 60 steel	Sugino TGT forged alloy triple Ring sizes 48-40-28	SunTour Mountech
Peugeot VTT2	627	50 54 57	Lugged high tensile steel frame	Two water bottles Rear rack Brake and gear guides	Steel	Solida alloy triple Ring sizes 48-38-28	Front Simplex SKA 33 Rear Simplex SX4 30
Gemini Trials	649	46 51 56	Lugged Tange Champion MTB Cro mo tubing	One waterbottle Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MTB 225	SR Custom forged alloy triple Ring sizes 48-42-28	Shimano Deore XT
Diamond Back Meen Streak	650	47 51 56	Lugged Tange PG chrome moly three main tubes Mangalloy fork	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange Falcon sealed	Sugino AT alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-26	SunTour Le Tech
Malvern Star Bushranger	664	55	Lugged double butted chrome moly tubing	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange MA 60	SR Aerox alloy triple Ring sizes 46-36-26	Shimano AL-11
Apollo Cascade	695	49 53	Lugged Tange chrome moly tubing main tubes and fork	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Kuwahara dust sealed	Sugino TGT alloy triple Ring sizes 48-34-26	SunTour Mountech
Clamont Coronet	795	44 46 53 58	Lugged triple butted chrome moly all tubes	Two waterbottles All cable guides RLow and F racks	Tange MTB 225 sealed	Sugino TAT alloy triple Ring sizes 50-40-28	Shimano Deore XT
Woolys Wheels Ultimate ATB	795	50 54 60	Lugged Tange taper butted chrome moly Forks TIG welded cro mo	Two water bottles Brake and gear cable Rear rack	Tange Falcon	Sugino TGT alloy triple Ring sizes 48-38-28	Shimano Deore XT
Hillman Sherpa	799	51 56 61	Lugged Tange MTB PG seamless chrome moly all tubes	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides	Tange Falcon	Sugino alloy TGT Ring sizes 48-40-24	SunTour XC-II
Apollo Siera Grande	899	49 51	Lugged Kuwahara chrome moly all tubes	Two waterbottles Brake and gear cable guides Rack	Kuwahara Laser alloy	Shimano 600EX triple with Biopace rings 48-38-28	Shimano Deore XT



Gear range	Control levers	Freewheel	Pedals	ims	Hubs	Tyres	Brakes	Handlebars	HS stem	Grips	Saddle	Seatpost	Post clamp	Additional equipment
97-37	SunTour Mighty thumb shifters	SunTour 5-speed 14-28	HTI pressed steel	Kinlin steel 26x1.5	Steel sealed	Chang Shin 26x1.5 Ridge tread	Alloy side pull caliper type MTB levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Viscount anatomic	Steel post type	Hex bolt type	Alloy kick stand
89-28	SunTour Mighty thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 6-speed 14-34	SR SP513 moulded plastic	CMC Steel 26x1.75	CMC Steel	Kenda 26x2.125 Ridge tread	Chang Star (Mafac type) cantilever	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	OGK firm rubber	Viscount vinyl anatomic	Steel post type	Alloy allen key clamp	-
93-28	SunTour LD 3500 thumb shifter	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-34	Alloy cage black	Araya steel 26x1.5	Steel MX type	26x1.5 Ridge tread	Chang Star 880 cantilever and MTB levers	Steel flat type	Alloy double clamp	Soft rubber	VIC 2214 Vinyl anatomic	Steel post type	Hex bolt type	-
89-28	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano UG 5-speed 14-32	Shimano PD MX15 alloy	Ukai steel 26x1.75	SIW steel	IRC 26x1.75 Ridge tread	Dia Compe MX 1000 alloy side pull	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Firm rubber	Takahashi Panamax 19 2 spring	Stainless steel post type	Hex bolt type	-
85-43	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 6-speed 14-28	Moulded plastic bear trap	Steel 26x1.75	Steel	Silver Star 26x2.125 Ridge	Alloy cantilever	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Kashimax moulded anatomic	Alloy post type	SunTour Q/R	Alloy kick stand Leather strap
88-20	Loubao alloy thumb shifters	Lubao 6-speed 14-34	Wellgo forged alloy	Sumo alloy 26x1.75	High flange alloy	Kenda 26x2.125 Ridge tread	Polygon cantilever MTB levers	Bullmoose type	Chrome moly	Soft rubber	Vinyl anatomic	Kalloy alloy micro adjust	Chien Cheng Q/R	Aero water bottle & cage
85-24	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-30	Victor alloy bear trap	Sumo alloy 26x1.75	KK alloy	Kenda 26x2.125 Ridge tread	Chang Star 880 cantilever and MTB levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Viscount Terra Nova anatomic	Alloy post type	SunTour Q/R	-
97-40	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 5-speed 14-28	Alloy bear trap type	Sumo alloy 26x1.75	KT alloy	Cheng Shin CST 26x1.75 Ridge	Formos cantilever MTB levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Chin Cherng moulded 2 spring	Alloy post type	Kalloy Q/R	Alloy kick stand
97-34	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 5-speed 14-26	Alloy bear trap type	Sumo alloy 26x1.75	KT alloy	Cheng Shin CST 26x1.75 Ridge	Formos cantilever MTB levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Chin Cherng moulded 2 spring	Alloy post type	Kalloy Q/R	Alloy kick stand
93-34	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 5-speed 14-32	SR SP513 moulded plastic	Araya steel 26x1.75	Suzue alloy sealed	Mitsuboshi 26x1.75 Ridge	Dia Compe 890 caliper type 280 levers	Steel flat type	SR MTS 120 alloy	Firm rubber	Kashimax moulded anatomic	Steel post type	SunTour Q/R	Alloy kick stand
85-23	SunTour Mighty thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-30	VP 500 alloy	Ukai 26x1.5 alloy	Steel MX type	Cheng Shin 26x1.5 CS Ridge	Chang Star 880 cantilever and MTB levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Soft rubber	Pro max vinyl anatomic	Steel post type	SunTour Q/R	-
104-36	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 8-speed 13-30	KKT moulded bear trap	Alloy 26x1.75	Alloy sealed	Mitsuboshi 26x2.125 Ridge	Alloy cantilever	Chrome Moly flat type	SR alloy MTS 1000	Soft rubber	Kashimax vinyl anatomic	Alloy post type	SunTour Q/R	Alloy kick stand Leather shoulder strap
97-34	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-32	SR Custom M	Sumo Alloy 26x1.75	Suzue alloy	Cheng Shin 26x2.125 Knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Steel bullmoose	Steel	Soft rubber	Viscount anatomic	Alloy post type	SunTour Q/R	-
93-28/26	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 6-speed 14-34	SR 513 HI-impact plastic	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	Sanzhin alloy	National 26x1.75 Ridge tread	Dia compe 981 cantilever 281 levers	Chrome moly flat upswep bars	SR Alloy/chromo	Tange firm rubber	Selle Italia Leather anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	Allen key type	-
89-26	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 6-speed 14-34	HTI -A10 Black alloy	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	Alloy MX type	26x1.75 Ridge tread	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 Levers	Chrome moly flat type	SR MTS-101 Alloy	Soft rubber	VIC 2216 vinyl anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
98-20	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour PS Perfect 6-speed 13-32	KKT SMX Alloy	Ambrosio alloy 26x1.75	SunTour XC-II Sealed Brg	National MB 26x2.125 Ridge	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Kusuki Chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	OGK firm rubber	Kashimax anatomic vinyl	Sugino SP-H Alloy 220mm	SunTour Q/R	-
89-24	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-30	SR Custom M	Sumo alloy 26x1.75	Suzue alloy sealed	Cheng Shin 26x2.125 Knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Steel bullmoose	Steel	Soft rubber	Viscount anatomic	Alloy post type	SunTour Q/R	-
85-24	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour PS Gold 6-speed 14-28	KKT RMX alloy	Araya 7X Alloy 26x1.75	Suzue CSH alloy sealed	IRC Duromax 26x2.125 Knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Nitto 8801 reinforced alloy	SunTour XC-II alloy	Tange firm rubber	Kashimax F4 anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
89-23	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-32	SR alloy MTP-110	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	SR alloy	National MB 26x1.75 Ridge	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Kuruki Chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	OGK firm rubber	Viscount Terra vinyl anatomic	SR MTE 100 alloy Horiz adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
89-24	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 5-speed 14-30	Shimano PD MX15 alloy	Ukai 26x1.75 alloy	Suzue 3-E alloy MX type	IRC Duro max 26x1.75 Knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Nitto cr mo bullmoose type	Chrome moly	Tange firm rubber	Taihei Power vinyl anatomic	Sugino SP-H alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
89-23	Huret thumb shifters	5-speed 14-32	Sugino moulded plastic	26x1.75 alloy	Alloy Small flange sealed	26x1.75 Ridge tread	Dia Compe 981 cantilever 281 levers	Steel bullmoose type	Steel	Firm rubber	Selle Royal anatomic	Steel post type	Q/R type	Pump
89-21	Shimano Deore XT thumb shifters	Shimano UG 5-speed 14-34	Shimano PD MX15 alloy	Ukai 26x1.75 alloy	Shimano SX alloy	Panaracer 26x2.125 Ridge tread	Shimano Deore XT cantilever and levers	SR MT Chrome moly flat type	SR MTS 100 alloy	Soft rubber	Taihei moulded vinyl anatomic	Strong alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	Nagoaka tubular alloy rear rack
92-24	SunTour Microlite thumb	SunTour New Winner 6-speed 13-28	SunTour XC-II alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X Alloy 26x1.75	Suzue alloy sealed	IRC X-1 26x2.125 Block knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	Soft rubber	Selle Royal anatomic leather	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	Alloy waterbottle cage and bottle
85-23	Shimano EM thumb shifters	Shimano 6-speed 14-30	SR alloy beartrap style	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	Shimano alloy sealed	Mitsuboshi Z 26x2.125 Ridge	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Chrome moly straight type	SR MTS 100 alloy	Soft rubber	Kashimax anatomic leather	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	Alloy kick stand
89-21	SunTour Microlite thumb shifters	SunTour Perfect 6-speed 14-32	SunTour XC-II alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	SunTour sealed bearing	Kuwahara 26x2.125 Block knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 280 levers	Nitto chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	OGK firm rubber	MTB - CM Silver Mark anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
93-23	Shimano Deore XT thumb shifters	SunTour New Winner 6-speed 14-32	SunTour XC-II alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	SunTour sealed bearing	National 26x2.125 Block knobby	Dia Compe 980 cantilever 920 levers	Black chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	Tange firm rubber	Selle Italia leather anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-
89-26	Shimano Deore XT thumb shifters	Shimano UG 5-speed 14-28	SR MTP 100 alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	Suzue alloy sealed	Specialized Crosoads 26x1.75	Shimano Deore XT cantilever	SR flat type	SR MTS 120 alloy/cr mo	Soft rubber	Selle Italia leather anatomic	SR MTR alloy rear adjust	SunTour Q/R	Nagoaka alloy rack Two waterbottles and cages
96-20	SunTour XC-II thumb shifters	SunTour New Winner 6-speed anti corrosive 13-32	SunTour XC-II alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	SunTour XC-II Sealed Brg	National MB 26x2.125 Ridge	Shimano Deore XT Cantilevers and levers	Kusuki Chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	OGK firm rubber	Selle Italia leather anatomic	SR Laprade alloy 250 mm	SunTour Q/R	Black alloy bottle cage
96-23	Shimano Deore XT	SunTour New Winner 6-speed 13-32	SunTour XC-II alloy/cr mo	Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75	Deore XT alloy sealed	Kuwahara 26x2.125 Stud knobby	Shimano Deore XT cantilever and levers	Nitto chrome moly bullmoose	Chrome moly	Soft rubber	Jeguer leather anatomic	SR Laprade alloy micro adjust	SunTour Q/R	-



## *State of the art from the USA*

**From the home of mountain biking comes this new machine – the Excalibur. The bike is not available in Oz unless you want to import one. The maker is Fisher mountain bikes whose number one team rider Joe Murray is US MTB champion.**

Professional off road races are the ultimate proving grounds for the frameset refinements and component selections we make over the countless training hours that our top riders endure as race preparation. 1984 National Champion Joe Murray leads the half dozen Fisher Pro Team members who, with the dozen expert Fisher team racers put each new modification to the field test.

By working directly with the best tubing, frameset, and component manufacturers Fisher MountainBikes has developed a versatile high performance machine aimed at the sophisticated buyer — one who wants to upgrade or simply one who appreciates the "ride of champions". This production race bike, EX-CALIBUR, has the same proven competition geometry as our team bikes.

Excalibur's Tange Champion Mountain Bike tube set and Unicrown fork are also TIG welded like those of our top riders. Fisher's clamp-on

Bullmoose bar in alloy on the 18" and 19" frame sizes and Cr-Mo on the 20" and 21" with an alloy expander steerer stub are standard equipment. We've chosen the latest mountain bike components from Suntour: their XC derailleurs, shifters, levers, chain, seat post, seat post quick release, and MP-1000 pedals; and for extra braking reassurance and downhill control we've incorporated the XC cam brake on the chainstays. The New Dura Ace alloy head set and six speed (12-24) New Dura Ace Freehub set, with the Specialized (24/34/46) crank set and BB, and the new Dia-Compe NGC-982 front cantilever complete Excalibur's very light, reliable component group. Araya's silver RM-20 rims laced with 14/15 gauge SS double butted spokes, IRC 1.75" knobbies, Fisher double steel toe clips with Binda Super straps, and Hite Rite complete its race ready features. Excalibur comes in metallic Midnight Blue and gloss Chrome Yellow and weighs only 25 pounds in the 18" frame size.

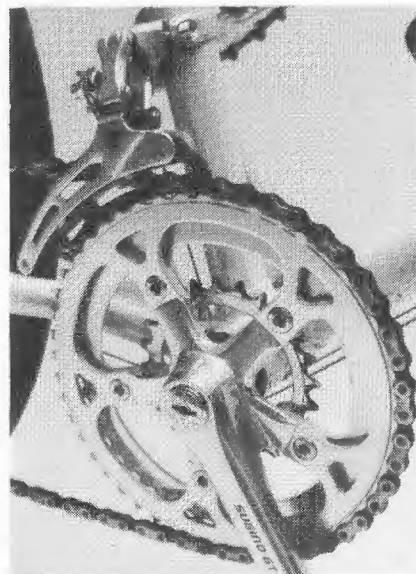
Bikes in the under \$500 bracket often use cheaper coterless cranks with steel rings. Make sure that the rings are interchangeable and that your dealer can supply as these parts will need to be replaced every five years or so depending on the amount of riding you do. Replacement rings for Sugino TGT and its higher quality equivalent the TAT are widely available throughout the world. To a lesser extent are the SR models and the Shimano Biopace. Though the latter has only just come onto the market replacements should become more readily available in future.

With the exception of a few bikes in the under \$500 range which use Taiwanese derailleurs and the Peugeot which uses the European Simplex brand most bikes use either Shimano or SunTour changers and levers. The best of these are the newer types developed specially for mountain bikes like the SunTour XC-II, Mountech, Le Tech, AG Tech, Shimano Deore XT and AL-11.

Front derailleurs have big problems with wide range triple front gears and the most efficient type is the 'top normal' operating SunTour XC-II which uses cable action and not just the return spring to drag the chain onto the difficult inner chain ring.

All bikes use thumb shifters. The most efficient are the Shimano Deore or AL-11 and SunTour XC-II or Microlite. The latter tends to be a little stiff and the lack of rubber cladding on the lever makes it uncomfortable in cold or wet conditions. Other types are only so so.

The popular Sugino TGT alloy triple chainwheel set is typical of the quality crank sets fitted to most mountain bikes. The model shown here is on the Hillman Sherpa which also uses the SunTour XC-II front derailleur.



### *Freewheel and gear range*

Five or six-speed freewheels mostly of SunTour manufacture are used.



Generally speaking the lowest priced models had gearing ranges higher than the more expensive bikes. While it could be easily said that any bike with a low gear higher than 35 is not a true mountain bike the lower gears offered on some bikes (20 and below) offered the other extreme where traction and stability at snails pace makes staying up very difficult indeed.

The optimum gear range is some where between a low of 23 and a high of 96. The high priced bikes using six-speed freewheels often gave the best gear range spread.

### Pedals

By far the most popular pedal fitted was the SunTour XC-II. These pedals have a chrome moly spindle, an alloy body and a rounded 'bear-trap' shaped cage. The SR MTP 100 fitted to the Repco Sierra is of similar quality and gives good support to the foot with a very large pedal contact area. The cheaper bikes generally had Taiwanese equivalents usually in the same wide double-sided pattern.

The case often with skinny-tyred bikes is that the pedals fitted are of lower quality than the rest of the bike. This is not the case with mountain bikes and generally good pedals are fitted in a majority of cases. The only cheap pressed steel pedals were to be found on



Wheels can be fitted with one of a range of tyres for all types of terrain. The knobblys shown here on the Clamont Coronet are suitable for rough terrain where maximum traction and comfort is required.

the Raleigh Youkon the lowest price bike in our survey.

### Wheels

While most of the models under the \$500 mark had steel rims a few were fitted with Taiwanese alloy types and two had the high quality Japanese Araya alloy rims. Steel rims add considerably to the weight of the bike and decrease braking capability in the wet but are generally harder to bend or buckle.

The Araya 7X alloy 26x1.75 alloy rim is considered to be the strongest of its type followed by the Ukai, Ambrosio and the Taiwanese Sumo brand.

The top priced models all feature sealed bearing hubs of one sort or another. Only the SunTour sealed hubs have true sealed inserts. The others have labyrinth seals covering their conventional internals. This type offers adjustability while the SunTour type gives replaceability of the individual bearing units.

On all wheels fourteen gauge spokes were used.

Tread patterns differed from bike to bike with the road type 'ridge' pattern tread the most popular. The Gemini with its beefy 26x2.125 ridge tyres gave an excellent ride on the dirt but was slower on the bitumen. 1.75 ridge pattern tyres are the best all round tyre for city street use but tend to bottom out

# SOUTHERN CROSS

## CRUISERS COMPARE OUR FEATURES

### OURS

- Six-speed gears
- Adjustable handlebars
- Straight-bar main frame for greater versatility
- Lightweight, aero sweep forks for lighter front end
- Oversize Mountain Bike brake levers
- Lifetime Warranty on frame and forks



### THEIRS

- Five-speed gears
- Fixed handlebars
- Drop frame design. (Requires longer seat pole creates weak point)
- Heavy, straight front forks
- Standard, compact brake levers
- Seven year warranty (maximum)

# NO COMPARISON!!!

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more readily on rough terrain. Knobbly treads are not as popular possibly because of their rough noisy ride on sealed roads.

### Brakes

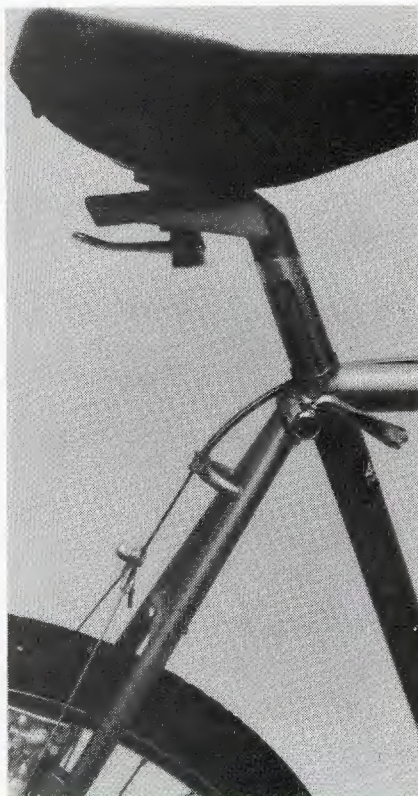
All the bikes surveyed bar three came fitted with cantilever brakes. The Shimano Deore XT with its smooth finished triangular shaped brake arms and hard rubber pad compound give similar performance to the Dia Compe 980's but their pad adjusting system is superior. Both have strong alloy levers.

On the cheaper bikes the Taiwanese cantilever brakes were generally hard to adjust and lacked the rigidity of the Japanese brands.

### Handlebar assembly

Chrome moly bullmoose bars are the choice of the majority of bike makers. Others fitted separate alloy/chrome moly stem and alloy flat bars. All of the handlebars were wide to extra wide and fitted with a variety of rubber grips. Only individual preference will determine whether soft or hard rubber is best.

One deficiency common to the majority of bikes in our survey was the location of the front brake cable stop on the handlebar or stem assembly. This makes it impossible to raise, lower or



All true mountain bikes should have a long seat pillar and a quick release clamp to allow continuous adjustment. This pillar on the Repco Sierra has rearward adjustment as well.

turn the handlebar stem without altering the brake cable setting. The stem doesn't need to be adjusted often but it is good to be able to move it without the trauma of readjusting the cantilever straddle cable. Cantilever brakes take patience and persistence to adjust to their optimum settings. You only really want to do it once!

### Saddle and pillar

Each individual has his or her unique reaction to bike saddles and often a specialist dealer will gladly substitute different types within a given price range. As your seating position for mountain bike riding is more upright it is essential that you try before you buy. All of the saddles fitted to the survey bikes were acceptable but some were more comfortable than others. The Selle Italia leather anatomic is a good all-round type available in mens and womens widths.

Bikes in the above \$500 price categories all came with alloy seat pillars and quick release pillar clamps. The Graecross Pathfinder was the only bike with a sub standard seat pillar – a short alloy post type which easily bends. Long steel posts on cheaper bikes or alloy pillar types on the up-market models are the only ones which should be fitted.

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#### Biker II

- Built-in visor
- Removable and washable fit-pad system
- Scotchlite reflective striping

#### Tourlife

- Built-in air-cooled, adjustable sun visor
- Deluxe brushed-nylon interior is removable and washable
- Scotchlite reflective graphics



**BELL**  
THIRTY YEARS AT THE TOP



# Technique for the trail

Riding on dirt roads requires a different technique than on the bitumen. Once you have mastered it you will find riding the bush tracks to be even more fun than you thought possible. Warren Salomon explains how.

Any one with time, care and big fat tyres can cruise effortlessly over the most abysmal road surfaces. Going fast requires more skill, extra care and a lot of nerve.

Once you are onto really rough roads it is first important to lower the seat. Some riders prefer to drop it to its lowest level. Like the road racer you are seldom sitting on the saddle for long periods at a time. Avoid the notion that the saddle is only for sitting on for there are times when it is positively dangerous (for both you or your machine) to have your bottom firmly planted on the saddle. Instead consider the saddle as the fixed pivot point for your legs.

The secret to successful off-road riding lies in where to put your body weight. On steep uphill you need to maintain a delicate balance between keeping sufficient weight on the back

wheel (to maintain traction) and on the front wheel to keep from lifting up and falling over.

On steep downhills you will need to keep your weight well back of the saddle to keep from placing too much weight on the front wheel. Lets consider each condition in turn.

## Downhills

There is nothing quite like the thrill of the quick descent and provided the road surface maintains some consistency you only need your nerve to let gravity pull you on unrestricted.

The best body position on quick descents is standing on the pedals with the cranks parallel to the ground. In this way your weight is balanced between both wheels. Your hands should be lightly gripping the handlebars and 'touching' the brakes when needed.



On steep descents it is important to keep your body weight as far back as possible and maintain a good centre of gravity.

When descending most of your weight is taken by the front wheel so therefore the ditches that cross your path can be dangerous obstacles especially when you are breaking. Using the front brake during a descent further shifts your weight onto the front wheel and increases the risk of a rather

## SIMPLY THE FINEST HILLMAN SHERPA

Sherpa comes equipped with SunTour XC-3 gears, hubs and pedals, Shimano Deore XT cantilever brakes and Aloy alloy rims. The Hillman Mountain Bike Team riding Sherpas took the top two positions in the Fat Tyre Classic/Victorian Championships 1985.



Optional extras include black alloy racks (inset picture)

For rugged all-terrain bags Hillman Cycles sell and recommend Wilderness Equipment panniers.



## Hillman Cycles

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*the proposed ANSI Z90.4 bicycle helmet test.*

*\*\*The SP4 is the lightest helmet of its kind available today.*



inelegant flight over the handlebars onto the gravel. In the Californian vernacular this is what is known as a 'face plant' and is probably the most common type of fall.

The correct preventative action is to avoid using the front brake where possible, stand in the pedals but with your body well back of the centre bracket. You should also pull back on the bars to 'lift' the front wheel out of the really deep drainage ruts while at the same time releasing completely the front brake.

Balanced braking front and back though an ideal on bitumen is not often an appropriate course of action on the dirt.

## Uphills

Wide range derailleur gearing systems using triple front chainrings are often asked to perform miracles by mountain bikers. Of all the many gearing combinations I have tried only a few will easily shift the chain from the middle front chain ring onto the small inner ring when under pressure. Top normal front derailleurs, which rely on the gear cable to shift the derailleur cage down, work the best. The other kind uses the return spring of the changer mechanism to shift the chain. It's a tall order for any derailleur. The only answer is to anticipate the hills and change down the on the front chainrings before you are on the hill and putting pressure on the pedals.

Once you are at the top of the hill it is wise to change up again on the front to keep tension on the chain and avoid getting it caught between the chainstay and the tyre.

On long long ascents the saddle should be raised to its correct height for efficient leg movement. In varying terrain where there are short steep up-hills at every turning you may find that standing in the pedals is the only way to maintain your balance. Be careful as you will also shift your weight off the rear wheel and lose your precious traction.

Mountain bike racers like the cyclo cross riders will often resort to the 24 inch or two-foot gear and carry their bikes quickly up short steep stretches. Under more relaxed conditions it is an incredible experience to comfortably pedal up impossible slopes and over difficult obstacles.

Finally safe efficient riding also involves an element of confidence in the machine and its limitations. Get to know your bike on more conventional dirt roads before venturing out onto the fire trails and tracks. Ease into it at a relaxed pace. Soon you will be riding down impossible slopes and loving every minute of it. Happy fat-tyre flying.

**36 Freewheeling**



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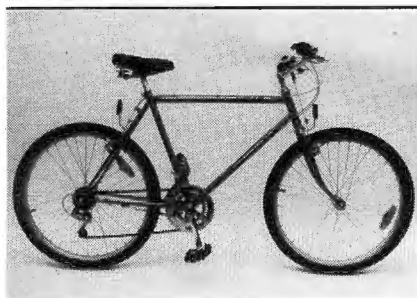


# Eight mountain bike reviews

Warren Salomon has ridden almost all of the 29 bikes in our survey this issue. The following single bike reviews present a detailed view of some very interesting machines all tested over rough trails in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney.

## Southern Cross Decathlon II Southern Cross Manly 10

Southern Cross Bicycles is a young company with its sights firmly set on the mass market. Their Decathlon and Manly models are priced to sell in volume.



The Manly 10 is a ten-speed ladies frame version of the Decathlon II.



The Decathlon and Manly are a similar design but with different shaped frames. The Decathlon is the fifteen-speed model with a conventional diamond shaped frame while the Manly 10 has a "ladies" type frame and ten-speed gearing.

The Decathlon was the better bike to ride as the frame on the Manly 10 was more flexible. This is common to ALL "ladies" and "mixte" style frames which, with their open geometry, tend to flex under load. What women bike riders should realise about mountain type bikes is that the top tube is a non

issue. The optimum frame size should be smaller than an equivalent skinny tyred bike and there should be more top tube clearance even though the bottom bracket is generally higher. That said, however, I do think that a short person may find this bike the only bike available to fit their requirements.

Both bikes sport 26x1.75 road/ridge tyres fitted to alloy rims. Forgetting the rough dirt roads for a minute the Manly 10 and the Decathlon are both good bikes to ride around the suburbs and city streets. The wide saddle and adjustable steel seat pillar make both bikes eminently suitable as an all purpose family bike. In fact the design is far superior to the conventional "step-through" framed models usually sold as family bikes.

Gearing on both bikes worked effortlessly with the Shimano EM thumb shifters a big bonus on bikes with such low price tags. The gear range on the Decathlon was acceptable for off-road riding but the range provided on the Manly only reinforced my observation that this bike is meant for the roads closer to home.

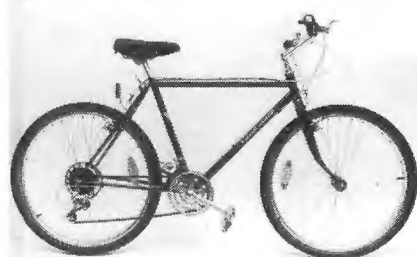
Off-road the Decathlon handled reasonably (it has a good steel frame) but its brakes were extremely difficult to adjust. Eliminating shudders and squeals from cheap cantilevers is a common problem.

The Manly 10's frame is painted an attractive apricot colour obviously designed to attract the more fashion conscious women riders. In contrast the Decathlon II with its grey-blue duco should appeal to the more conservative blokes. Southern Cross is currently an innovator in the area of bicycle paint schemes but I wish they and a few of the other manufacturers would get away from this "blue is for boys" syndrome and show the same flair that is demonstrated on their "ladies" range.

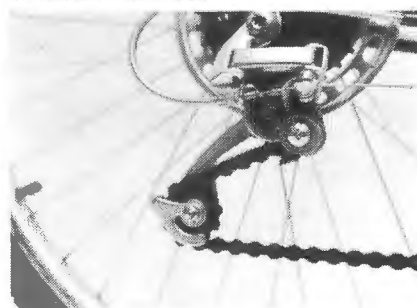
The Decathlon is definitely a bike for adventure and I predict it will be a big seller with the older-teens group who are fed up with their childish BMX bikes and one-speed cruisers.

## Graecross Pathfinder

The Graecross company have two mountain bikes in their range. The up-market Jackeroo was reviewed in this magazine last year (issue 24) and since then they have added the Pathfinder model to their range.



Robust SunTour AG gears are fitted to the Graecross Pathfinder.



The Graecross company has a good reputation for building quality bikes and the Pathfinder fits in well with their traditions. It is a mixture of alloy and steel componentry made in Taiwan from mostly Japanese parts.

The high tensile steel lugless frame in bright red is solidly built and not excessively heavy. The other equipment is mostly alloy and this gives the bike an acceptable overall mass.

Good quality Japanese Ukai rims are used on wheels fitted with conventional steel BMX type hubs and indicate the kinds of compromises made in order to keep the price to a very competitive level. In fact the price of the Pathfinder and its equipment mix make it a good first bike for someone wanting to get into the world of fat-wheels without going too far into debt.

The Taiwanese Chang Star alloy brakes are a copy of the popular Japanese Dia Compe cantilevers and work reasonably well though they are fiddly to adjust.

The wide saddle with one piece moulded rubber construction gave a

comfortable ride especially in more upright positions. Below it the plain alloy seat post is the Pathfinder's only weakness. It is far too short (and weak) for this kind of bike and should be replaced. The post on the bike tested bent early during a test ride and its shortness makes it practically useless on this kind of bike where seat pillars have to go up and down often to suit the riding conditions. An extra long steel pillar would have been a much better choice of equipment.

My favourite steel derailleurs, the excellent SunTour AG, gave effortless shifting but the old type shifting levers used on the bars were not as easy to manipulate as the newer thumb shifter types.

Generally speaking the Pathfinder gave a good responsive ride but the small frame size tested prevented me from giving the bike a tough workout. Given that it is well equipped and has a decent frame the Pathfinder should be popular. You may even have to join a queue to buy one as to date bike dealers have been selling them faster than Greacross can supply.

## RepcO Sierra

RepcO were one of the first firms to enter the mountain bike market in Australia and won the Retail Cycle Traders Bike of the Year Award in 1983 with their model of that time a forerunner of the Sierra.



The Repco Sierra features a fancy cast fork crown assembly. Note the smooth finished lugless frame.



Since 1983 the company has added to its range a lower priced model (the Skyline reviewed in issue 31) and has upgraded their mid priced model to the present Sierra. This bike was given a solid testing as the bike that carried me to Newnes and back in the article at the commencement of this fat-tyre feature. Under such arduous circumstances it performed faultlessly and continues to do so.

The Sierra is built around a lugless chrome moly frame with cast dropouts and a heavy duty cast fork crown assembly. Two sets of waterbottle are brazed onto the TIG welded frame. It is equipped with high quality alloy and chrome moly steel components so it's a reasonably light bike for its type.

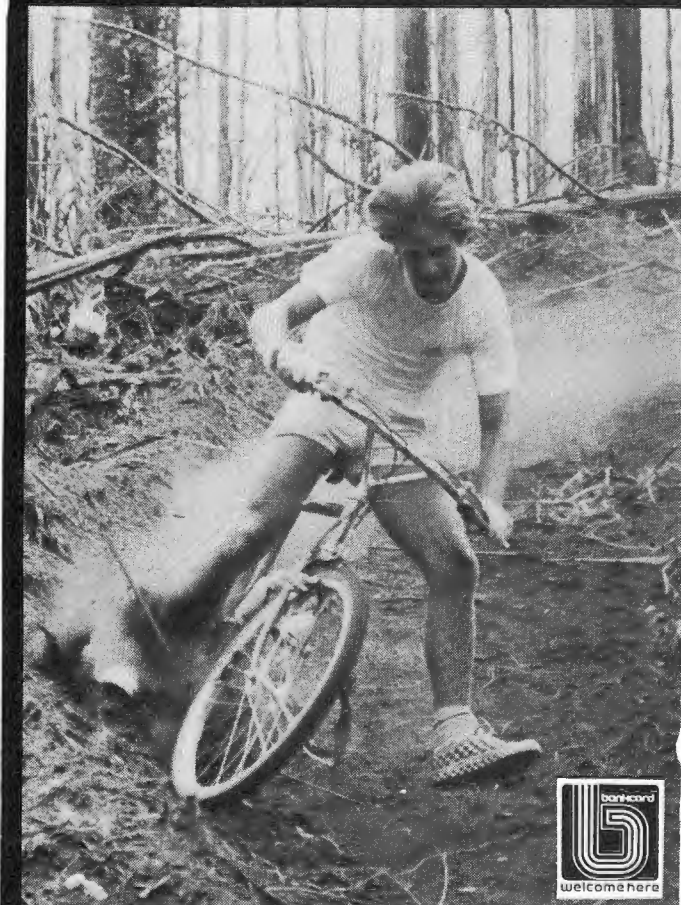
The well respected SunTour MounTech derailleurs are used and are controlled by Microlite thumb shifters. These give an acceptable performance though their stiffness is highlighted by the lack of rubber cladding on the levers.

On the test trip the Sierra was fitted with front and rear racks (front racks are a necessity on touring trips to maintain stability and to keep the front wheel on the ground). The chunky Dia Compe cantilever brakes worked powerfully but they tend to protrude more than

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most and poke into pannier bags. This is a problem common to most types of cantilever and one that rack and pannier bag makers have yet to solve.

Sugino's popular TGT alloy triple chainwheel set came fitted with a good selection of ring sizes but care is still needed when shifting down onto the small inner chainrings under high peddalling pressure. For any triple gear configuration you should always try to anticipate hills and change down on the front before you are onto the steep part of the slope.

The Tahei moulded vinyl anatomic saddle was comfortable enough on an extended trip to convince me that Japanese and Taiwanese anatomic saddles aren't all that bad. The edges were a little angular but caused no discomfort whatsoever. Underneath the saddle the SR MTE 100 alloy seat pillar allows adjustment of the saddle in a rearward direction for long descents. I tended not to use this feature as much as I lowered and raised the seat pillar in the frame but it was handy for setting my optimum saddle position before setting out.

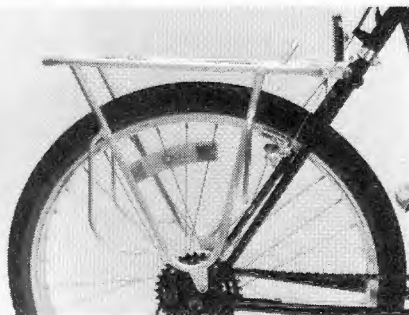
Overall the Sierra is an excellent mid price-range machine with good quality equipment like the Araya alloy rims and the SR extra wide pedals. These had a double alloy cage which properly supported the sole of the foot across the huge expanse of the pedal contact surface.

## Gemini Trials

**The Gemini is a very comfortable bike to ride and offers good value for your dollar.**



A heavy duty tubular alloy rack is standard equipment on the easy to ride Gemini Trials.



It's in the mid price range that the fiercest competition is developing. All of these bikes are built around lightweight chrome moly frames and have fitted high quality componentry. The Gemini sits snugly in the middle of this price category and offers good value for good performance.

The Trials has a more upright geometry on the frame which is accentuated by the SR MTS 100 alloy/chrome moly stem and separate chrome moly flat type bars. On rough fire trails it handles comfortably and its wide 2.125 ridge type tyres and upright seating position give a feeling of effortless low level flight.

High quality Shimano equipment is used to control braking and the gears. The Deore XT cantilevers are compact and well designed and their brake block compound works efficiently on the Ukai alloy rims to provide firm positive stopping power.

Shimano Deore XT front and rear derailleurs are smoothly controlled by chunky thumb shifters which come with "user friendly" rubber hoods on the lever arms.

Wisely Gemini have built their bike with the higher cost equipment where it counts. They have fitted the Trials with good gears brakes and frame and have kept the overall price down by fitting conventional alloy MX type hubs instead of the sealed type. To further set this bike apart from the pack they have fitted a new type Nagoaka tubular alloy rear rack. This rack has been specially designed for mountain bikes using cantilever brakes. Bags fitted to this rack are kept away from the protruding cantilever arms by its clever design.

The Tahei moulded anatomic saddle was reasonably comfortable even on rough dirt tracks. In fact it was more comfortable than it looked.

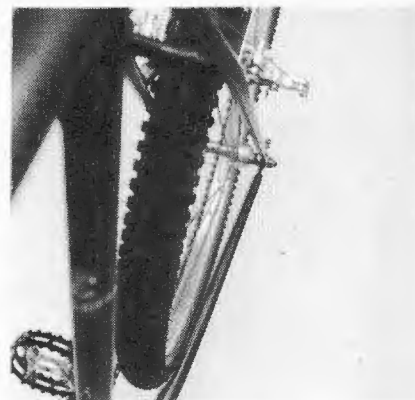
The deep racing green paintwork is thick and well finished and like the bike as a whole should stand up to a lot of rough treatment on a lot of rough terrain.

## Clamont Coronet

**Comparing Rolls Royces is not an easy task. At the top end of the market where customers are fewer and more discriminating the competition is perhaps more intense than in the lower price ranges. One expects the best and the Coronet is designed to deliver.**



The superbly built frame of the Clamont Coronet showing the recessing on the inside of the chain stays.



Coronet's frame was the finest of the current mountain bike crop. It is lightweight with double butted chrome moly tubing used through out. It has an elegant finish down to the deep smooth royal blue paintwork. All possible brazed-on mounts are provided including low-mount front and rear racks and provision for two waterbottles. I particularly liked the recessed tube treatment on the insides of the chain stays...nice.

Componentry on the Coronet is suitably top notch with Deore XT derailleurs and gear levers used to control the power train. Dia Compe 980 cantilevers and 280 levers are also of high quality. The black full chrome moly bullmoose bars are finished-off with firm rubber contoured Tange grips.

Sugino's top of the range crankset the TAT is the choice of chainwheel set for the Coronet. The TAT is a higher finished chainwheel set than the TGT though its rings are interchangeable. At the other end of the drive train is a SunTour New Winner 6-speed freewheel with 14 - 32 ratios.

On the wheels sealed bearings are used through out. The SunTour hubs are superbly finished and well matched to the fine Araya 7X alloy rims. Clamont have fitted block knobby tyres and as is the Coronet is ready to ride in any competitive off-road event. The bike on rough terrain handled like a thoroughbred. Its frame geometry and first class componentry combine to produce a machine that responds easily to what ever was demanded of it.

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Other componentry was consistent with the up-market design of the Coronet. The leather Selle Italia anatomic saddle is one of the most comfortable around and the wide oval shaped SunTour XC-II pedals have a good reputation as one of the best pedals available for off-road riding. In all a very elegant and well designed machine.

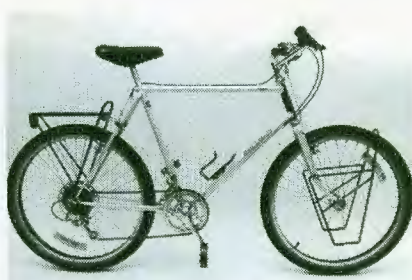
## Hillman Sherpa

**This bike is the direct descendent of the Hillman Alpine which in early 1984 set the standard for the high quality end of the Australian mountain bike market.**

It is often the case that when you are onto something good there are soon imitators. In order to maintain their edge Hillman have gone one better and have introduced the Sherpa.

The Sherpa is built around an excellent Tange chrome moly frame which comes with braze-ons for two waterbottles, brake and gear cable guides/tunnels under the bottom bracket.

The frame is finished in stunning pearl yellow paintwork with black enamel trim. It looks a very distinctive



The Hillman Sherpa uses the new SunTour XC-II rear derailleur developed especially for off-road use. The bike is shown with its optional racks fitted.



bike and off-road it handles likewise.

Sherpa breaks new ground by using the latest SunTour XC-II equipment. The rear changer shifted the chain smoothly on the rear six-speed New Winner freewheel though, with a little grit and mud thrown in, the narrower six-speed combo takes a while to settle down. Gear changing on all six-speed Winners is lightning fast and the new style XC-II levers with their comfortable rubber hoods makes shifting on the Sherpa a breeze.

The big plus with Sherpa's gears is the XC-II front changer with its top-normal cage movement. This means that it is the cable movement and not the action of the derailleur return spring that moves the chain down onto the small front inner chainwheel.

Hillman's are flexible with gearing and will fit your preferred combination if you wish. The bike I tested had a halfstep and alpine arrangement on the front similar to the Alpine I tested last year. This configuration is more suited to powerful competition riders as the majority of usable gears are higher up the range. I would prefer to stay on the middle ring longer and have a much lower gear before I run out of rear ratios. The big advantage with the half-step arrangement is that it is easier to shift up and down on the front... but only just.

# Gemini

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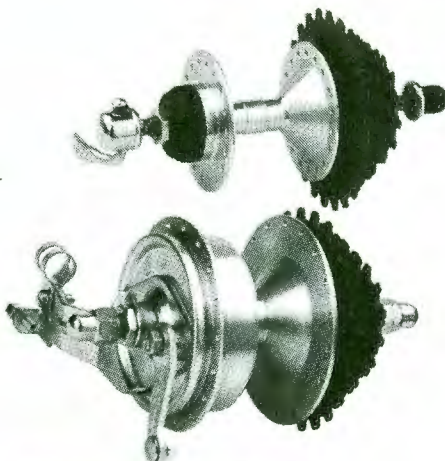


**SACHS Orbit HT. Rear Wheel  
Drum Brake Hub with 2 Speeds**

- Spider gear Transmission. Transmission ratio: 1st speed: 1:1 2nd Speed: 1:0.74
- Aluminium sleeve
- Replaces front double chain-wheel, with tooth differential of approx. 13 teeth
- 6-cog sprocket cluster, matching front wheel hub: SACHS Orbit V

The SACHS Orbit hub replaces the second front chainwheel and the derailleur, felt by many to be difficult to operate. Together with the 6 speed Commander derailleur, this new combination provides 12 easy-to-shift sportsstyle speeds.

- Models: with or without quick-grip. also available with drum brake.
- Model with push-in type axle under development.
- 5 or 6-cog sprocket with 11-32 teeth possible. Available at present: 13-28 teeth.
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- Accurate concentricity of sprockets.

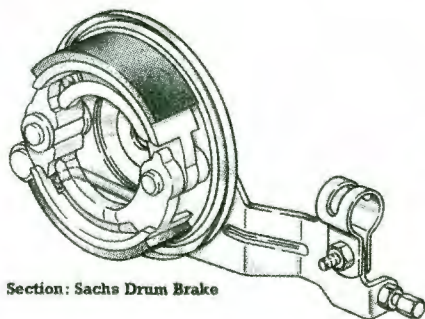
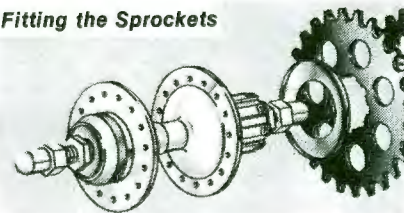


**SACHS Galaxie HT. Rear Wheel  
Drum Brake Hub**

## SACHS Galaxie Free-Wheel Hub

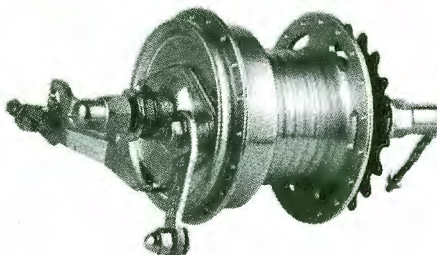
Fast sprocket changing coupled with excellent easy pedalling and a quick-grip device serve to make the SACHS Galaxie the ideal basic sporting element for all types of derailleurs. With its 5 and 6-cog clusters, it is suitable both for the SACHS Commander pre-select system and for conventional gearing systems, even through to the out-and-out racing systems.

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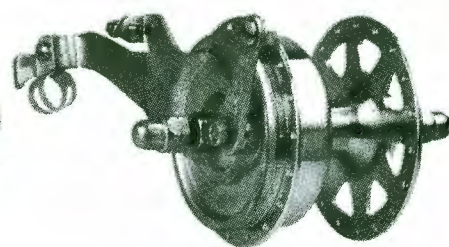


Section: Sachs Drum Brake

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I was very impressed with the performance of the XC-II derailleurs. They should prove very popular especially in competition use.

With their upgrade from Alpine to Sherpa Hillman have continued with the Shimano Deore XT cantilever brakes and the oval XC-II pedals all good equipment but have changed the rims to the excellent Araya 7X fitted with the wider 26x2.125 National Panaracer tyres.

The saddle pillar is an extra long (250mm) SR Laprade and is fitted with a Selle Italia leather covered anatomic.

Optional extras not included in the price are matching black front (low mount) and rear Minoura racks, anti corrosive body for the freewheel and XC-II stem and matching chrome moly handlebars.

My only fault with this bike is a minor one. I wish Hillman would have fitted a plastic spoke protector to the rear wheel instead of the alloy one. The one fitted rattles and chatters away to its self and has a tendency to amplify my occasional gear-change bungles for all the world to hear.

Its any wonder this bike is already winning races. Its a great touring bike too.

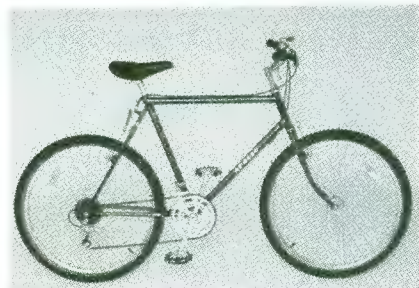
## Apollo Siera Grande

**A limited edition mountain bike from the company which won all of the prizes in the mountain bike section at last years Retail Cycle Traders Bike of the Year Awards.**

Apollo doesn't expect to sell a lot of these bikes (it is the most expensive bike on the fat-tyre market at present) but for the connoisseur its a hard machine to beat.

Siera Grande is a very light bike and moves like the wind in spite of its big 2.125 knobbys. The main reason for its striking performance was the Shimano Biopace chainwheel set. We are going to hear more about this equipment in future but for the moment I am very impressed.

When I first took the bike out onto the streets I couldn't work out why the bike felt so responsive. Sure the frame is good but there was an absence of surge when powering down on the pedals off from standing starts. Then it hit me. The Biopace rings really do work!



The Shimano Biopace chainwheel set is a feature of the Apollo Siera Grande.



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On the trail the Siera (one "r" according to Apollo) Grande chainwheels transmitted smooth even power to the rear wheel. This feature is a big bonus on steep up-hills in low gear where the pedal stroke surge often has an unbalancing effect.

Biopace rings are not round like conventional rings. They are almost egg shaped and are designed to even out the "dead spots" which normally occur because of the up and down leg movement. An in depth review will appear in future *Freewheelings*.

The chain rings are good: enough said.

Shimano Deore XT brakes and derailleurs give excellent performance as do the Araya 7X alloy rims. This bike also uses Deore XT labyrinth sealed hubs which retain their adjustability, simplicity and are user servicable.

Siera Grande's frame is made from chrome moly tubing and is manufactured by Kuwahara of Japan the maker of Apollo bikes. The overall quality of construction was good except that poorly designed gear cable stops were used. These are an older type and are very shallow allowing the outer cable to twist and so adding friction and wear to the cable inner at that point. The bike I tested was part of the very small first batch and Apollo may have rectified this small problem on the

second shipment which arrives in November.

This is a high quality bicycle offering the best that Japan can offer in an off-road machine. You may have to wait to buy one but it is worth it.

## Frames

### Frame Size.

Inches	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
To nearest Centimetre	46	48	51	53	56	58	61	64	66

### Index of reviews of current mountain bike models featured in previous *Freewheelings*.

Graecross Jackaroo Issue 24 page 43  
Malvern Star Bogart Issue 31 page 19  
Malvern Star Bushranger Issue 21  
page 31  
Raleigh Yukon Issue 26 page 35  
Repco Skyline Issue 31 page 23  
Ricardo Bushbike Issue 25 page 49  
Woolys Ultimate Issue 29 page 54

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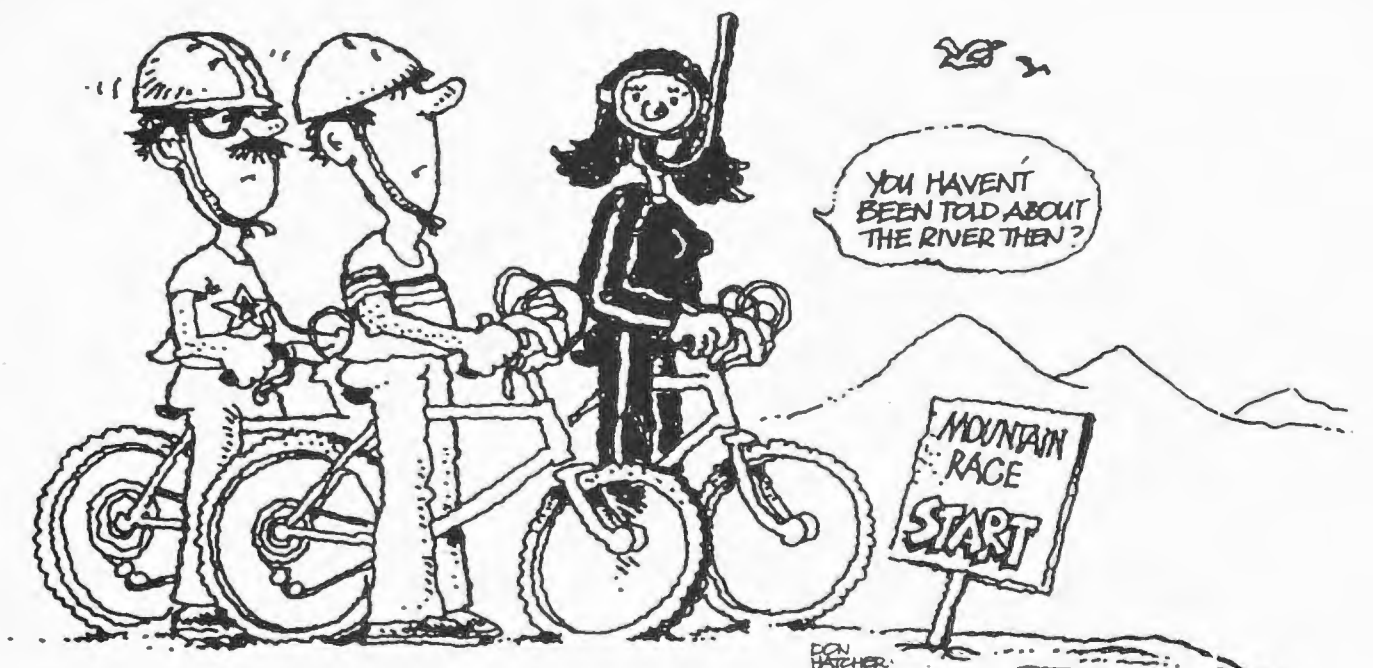


# Someville

## FAT TYRE FANTASY



Someville  
 "Man, these potholes are getting way beyond a joke."



# Hillman scoops Classic

**In a strong showing Team Hillman riders took the major placings in the recent Repco Fat Tyre Classic.**

Melbourne: Triathlete Rohan Philips took top placing in the overall Expert section of the Repco Fat Tyre Classic held recently on the outskirts of Melbourne. The course was run over rugged ground for a total of three laps. Philips finished his successive laps in 41, 42 and 43 minutes to win ahead of champion UK cyclo cross rider Eric Stone.

Eric, who is also a Team Hillman rider, was the joint winner of last years inaugural Repco Classic. Both riders rode Hillman Sherpa bikes with

standard equipment except for 1.5 Specialized Tri Cross tyres.

A Hillman rider John Carmichael was also the winner of the novice section and rode to victory on a Hillman Alpine the forerunner of the new Sherpa.

## Mountain Bike Nationals postponed

The National mountain bike Championships set down for November 3 near Sydney have been postponed until the new year. Race promoter Martin Whiteley has cited lack of a

willing sponsor and difficulties in finding a suitable course as the reasons behind the sudden cancellation.

The race was to have drawn riders from all over the country to decide the national and NSW champions. The meeting to set up AMBA (the Australian Mountain Bike Association) has also been postponed and discussions will commence between enthusiasts in all states towards the speedy establishment of AMBA to conduct the Championships.

Martin says he is deeply disappointed with the cancellation but he explains that until the sport is on a firmer footing it is impossible for him to carry out such a large undertaking with limited support. So far he has received about 50 enquiries from around the country and hopes to be able to notify those people through the pages of *Freewheeling* when a new date has been set.

*Freewheeling* magazine has agreed in the mean time to act as a contact point for any one interested in helping set up AMBA. Local meetings will be held before the new year to consolidate interest in the Sydney and Melbourne regions and to establish a national steering committee in time for an inaugural general meeting to be held in the new year.

Melbourne enthusiasts can contact Australia's only mountain bike club The Fat Tyre Flyers through (03) 830 5902 or (03)380 9685.

**Above: Team Hillman riders in the Fat Tyre Classic left to right - Ian Burman, Rohan Phillips, Alan Hill, John Carmichael and (inset) Eric Stone.**





# A CLINCHER NEVER HAD IT SEW GOOD.

If you think you need a sew-up for great road racing performance, think again. Whether you're a roadie or a triathlete, you know the importance of lightweight cycling. IRC's new Road Lite EX delivers this performance with the durability, convenience and cost savings you can only find in a clincher. Road Lite EX is the lightest clincher in the world—innovative tire compounds and hi-tech manufacturing techniques make this possible. Road Lite EX weighs less than the lightest clinchers produced by other leading manufacturers, and, in fact, even with IRC's super-lightweight butyl tube (70g), it weighs less than a standard tubular tire.

## WORLD'S LIGHTEST

WEIGHT (g)	0	100	200	300
BRAND A			235	75g*
BRAND B			220	75g*
IRC ROAD LITE EX			205	70g*
TUBULAR (STANDARD)			280-300	+ BUTYL TUBE WEIGHT

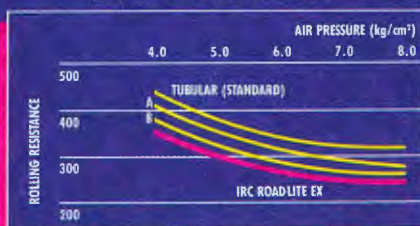
All tires 700 x 25C. Brands A and B are nationally available, and represent the lightest clinchers produced by these Japanese companies. Tubes are lightest butyl tubes available from each manufacturer.

From blackwalls through skinwalls, and now Road Lite EX, IRC technology has been at the forefront of bicycle tire manufacturing since 1922. Today, IRC is a division of INOAC, a multinational corporation specializing in the rubber, plastics and polyurethane industries. A constant exchange of information between divisions means IRC fully exploits new developments and applies them as practical solutions to a variety of esoteric problems. This interaction has helped create the world's best clincher: Road Lite EX.

Because IRC technology can produce an extremely light, strong casing

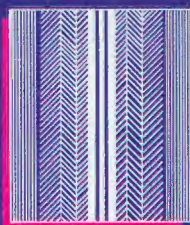
using slender denier, flexible nylon fibers in conjunction with specially developed rubber compounds, Road Lite EX demonstrates the lowest rolling resistance in standardized testing. When fully inflated to manufacturer's specifications, IRC easily outperforms other clinchers.

## EASY ROLLER



Comparison of Rolling Resistance based on 700x25C tires, standardized testing procedure. Brands A and B are nationally available, and represent the lightest clinchers produced by these Japanese companies.

In addition, the latest computer techniques are coupled with IRC materials technology to further enhance tire production. The Road Lite EX computer-aided tread design features a herringbone pattern that widens toward the sidewalls, a subtle change that helps provide better traction in turns and greater stabilization around corners.



Finally, Road Lite EX offers all these features—plus an additional bonus: lasting performance. The high carbonated rubber compound, combined with innovative polymer synthetics, makes an extremely wear-resistant tire. IRC has successfully sacrificed weight without

sacrificing strength or performance. IRC's Road Lite EX is nearly twice as wear-resistant as a standard tubular tire.

## EXTENDED MILEAGE

WEAR RESISTANCE	0	50	100
BRAND A		52	
BRAND B		39	
IRC ROAD LITE EX			100
TUBULAR (STANDARD)		66	

All tires 700 x 25C. Tested by Akron method to determine wear resistance of tread rubber. Brands A and B are nationally available, and represent the lightest clinchers produced by these Japanese companies.

Advanced design, superior construction, innovative materials, and hi-tech manufacturing all add up to Road Lite EX, the world's lightest clincher. Forget the glue, forget the hassles, forget the cost. Check into Road Lite EX, and see why our clincher has it sew good! Look for the entire EX series, including Touring EX and Road Winner EX, at bike shops nationwide.

## EX SERIES SPECIFICATIONS

	WEIGHT	WIDTH	PRESSURE	OUTSIDE DIAMETER
ROAD LITE EX	700 x 25C 205g	24 mm	100 psi	675 mm
	700 x 28C 235g	26 mm	100 psi	683 mm
	27 x 1 210g	24 mm	100 psi	683 mm
TOURING EX	27 x 1 1/4 285g	26 mm	100 psi	690 mm
	27 x 1 1/4 305g	28 mm	95 psi	695 mm
ROAD WINNER EX	27 x 1 1/4 285g	26 mm	100 psi	690 mm
	27 x 1 1/4 305g	28 mm	95 psi	695 mm
BUTYL TUBE (W/PRESTA VALVE)	700x70C, 700 x 25C, 27 x 1	70g	-	-

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# *The fourth annual Repco Freewheeling to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride is better than ever.*

The Repco Freewheeling to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride is Australia's big big one-day fun and fitness ride. All you need is a trusty bike and the willingness to take the challenge and ride the 85 km south to the city of steel. This years ride will contain many new attractions and prizes.

The ride this year will take place on Sunday November 24 and will push off from Belmore Park adjacent to Central Railway Station at 8 am sharp. All materials for pre registered riders will be sent out before the ride so if have registered already you won't have wait in a queue.

## **Late Registrations**

This year for the first time we will be accepting late registrations on the day. We would rather not (because of the difficulties in pre ordering most of the riders kit materials and cake etc for morning tea) but in response to increased demand we have decided

to open the ride this year for on-the-day late registrations. Late rego's will cost \$9.50 and you may have to queue up to get your riders package at Belmore Park. Please note that on-the-day registrations will only be available at Belmore Park. Desks will be set up and operating from 7:00 am onwards.

Riders this year will receive an ID card which will need to be carried with you and presented at Wollongong Station to claim your pre ordered rail ticket. Space for riders and bikes on trains returning from Wollongong after the ride is limited. All space is reserved for registered riders with preference given to pre registered riders. If you register on-the-day be early otherwise rail seats may sell out quickly.

## **Entries close on November 1**

You could be reading this after that date but don't want to register on the morning. You may register and pick up your riders kit personally at the *Freewheeling* office in the city from November 7 onwards. This is considered a late entry but you are certain to get rail seats if you register in this manner. If you are registering your friends this way be certain to have their signed forms with you.



## Pre ride overnight accommodation

We have been asked by a number of riders to make recommendations on suitable hotel or motel accommodation close to the start of the ride. Last year a number of out-of-town people experienced some unsympathetic attitudes towards their bikes on the part of hotel keepers. This year we would like to recommend the following establishments for your overnight pre-ride accommodation: The Rooftop Motel 146 Glebe Pt Rd (approx 10 minutes ride from Belmore Park) (02) 660 7777. They offer undercover parking for bikes but you should bring a lock as well. Room only costs \$39 single or \$44 for two persons.

You should make your own bookings well in advance telling them that you are participating in the Repco Freewheeling to the Gong Bicycle Ride. You may be allowed to keep your bike in your room but this will depend on the condition of your machine (is it clean?) and the size of room you have been allocated. In any case undercover bike parking is assured but remember to bring your own lock.

## The route

At 8:00 am the Lord Mayor of Sydney Alderman Doug Sutherland will officially start the ride in Belmore Park.

The route takes you first through the southern suburbs (lightly trafficked at that time of the morning) and down into the beautiful Royal National Park for a morning tea break at Audley. From Audley the ride ambles along

Lady Carrington Drive through the beautiful forests along the Hacking River to the lunch stop at Red Cedar Flat.

In the afternoon you will leave the forest and ride the magnificent coastal road down to Wollongong. This year you will receive your cloth patch and a small certificate of achievement at the ride's end near Flagstaff Point. The Lord Mayor of Wollongong and Local Member of Parliament Alderman Frank Arkell will be on hand to welcome riders to his city. From there its a short pedal to the train station from where the SRA will transport you and your bike back to Central. What a day!

## Big lunchtime attractions

This year at the lunch time stopover at Red Cedar Flat we will be running a fashion parade featuring sports clothing for cyclists and triathletes. The parades are of short duration followed by a break. Performances will commence at 11.30 and finish at 1.00 pm so everyone will get a chance to see a performance once. The parades will feature original clothing by Sarina. During the breaks judging will take place for the team and individual best dressed rider awards.

Healthy lunches drinks and fruit will also be on sale at the lunch stop.

## Support

The ride is, as usual, heavily supported with vehicle crews to attend to mechanical breakdowns and come to your rescue in the event of an emergency. Bike shops providing this year's support crews are: Blacktown Cycles, Clarence Street Cyclery, Dapto Cyclesport, Inner City Cycles, Spearman Cycles,

## STAFF WANTED

Enthusiastic workers are required to staff this years 'Gong ride. We are seeking six people capable of responsibly carrying out a range of tasks involved in the running of the ride. You will need a current drivers licence and will start early and see the ride through to its conclusion.

Previous experience of past rides is preferable but not necessary. Most of your work will involve the setting up and dismantling of the various stopover locations on the ride. You will not be doing any riding.

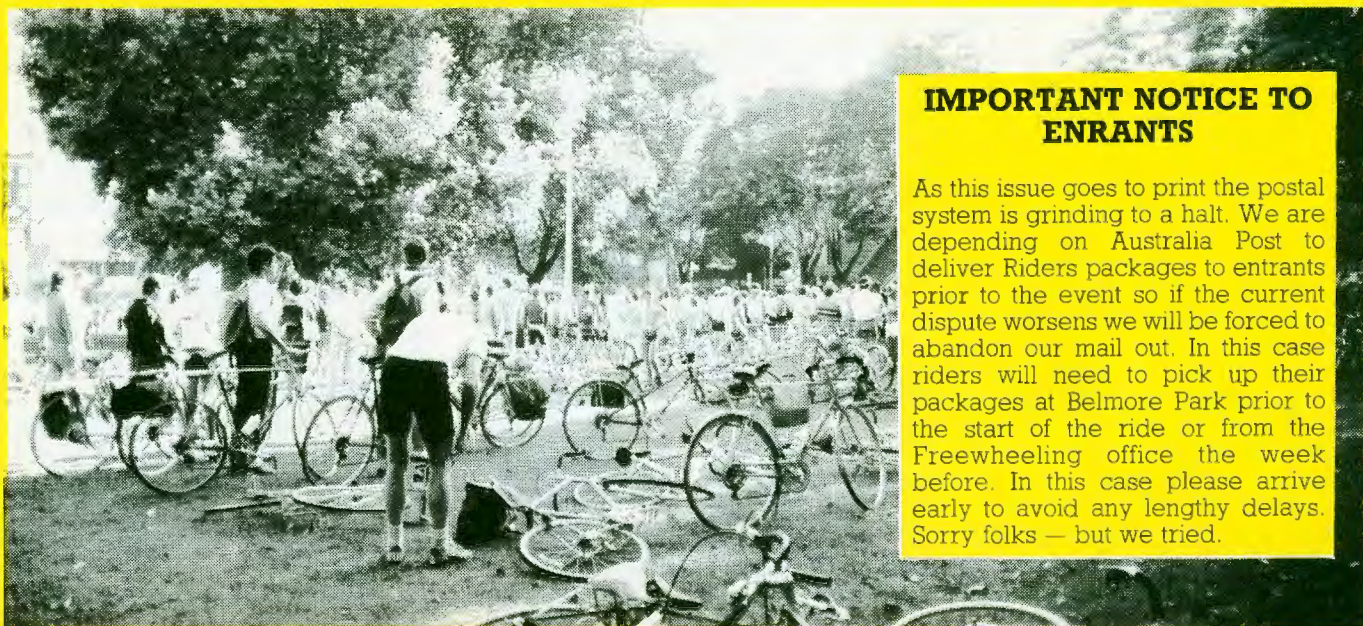
Good wages for the right people. Contact Warren Salomon on (02) 264 8544 business hours before November 15.

Spokes Cycles and Woolys Wheels. We recommend that all riders get their bikes serviced **BEFORE** the ride and suggest that you take your bike along to any one of these professional dealers at least one or two weeks prior to the event.

## Guides Meetings

Approximately 100 volunteer bicycle ride guides are needed on the day to ensure that the ride proceeds in a safe and orderly manner. As well members of the Motor Cycle Riders Association will assist the organisers to ensure good communications throughout the ride. The St Johns Ambulance will also be on hand just in case.

If you are a responsible rider and want to help the ride by setting a good



## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ENTRANTS

As this issue goes to print the postal system is grinding to a halt. We are depending on Australia Post to deliver Riders packages to entrants prior to the event so if the current dispute worsens we will be forced to abandon our mail out. In this case riders will need to pick up their packages at Belmore Park prior to the start of the ride or from the Freewheeling office the week before. In this case please arrive early to avoid any lengthy delays. Sorry folks — but we tried.



# REPCO Freewheeling TO THE 'GONG BICYCLE RIDE 1985

example to other riders then the ride needs you. You will be supplied with a Guides Tee shirt and will be asked to ride responsibly at your normal pace. You may have to monitor a busy intersection and look out for reckless behaviour both bike rider and motorist. Its not a difficult task and you should not be delayed greatly but it is best if you are an experienced rider as others will look to you for guidance.

Meetings will be held in Sydney and Wollongong in November for participating riders. These will take the form of a short briefing where you will be shown a video of past rides and given recommendations for your part in this years event.

Meetings and venues for 1985 Guide Briefings are: Sydney - a choice of two evenings - 7:30 pm Tuesday November 12 or 7:30 pm Tuesday November 19 at the Inner City

Education Centre, 37 Cavendish St Stanmore; Wollongong - one meeting - 7:00 pm at the Corrimal Bowling Club, Francis St Corrimal. All meetings should last approximately 2 hours and conclude with a light supper.

The 1985 ride is the fourth annual ride and already over two thousand people have successfully completed the journey. Join in this year's ride by filling out an entry form and send it with your ride fee to *Freewheeling* post haste.

For your \$8.00 (\$9.50 late entry) ride fee you will receive the following: A fully illustrated guide book - a great souvenir of the event, morning tea at Audley, Commemorative cloth patch, achievement certificate plus heaps of well organised support. Your fee also covers additional expenses such as a National Park service and postal handling charges. Your entry package will be posted to you and should reach you one to two weeks prior to the event.

Rail travel should also be booked when you enter as accommodation will be strictly limited. This year we expect to have full capacity on all of the trains running during the afternoon so reserve your rail ticket when you enter.

## Prizes

This year we will be awarding \$50 cash prizes to the best team of four riders and bike gear to the runner-up team of four. If you've got a weird or wacky outfit then grab your friends and come along you could win.

For the first time this year we will be awarding a \$50 cash prize to the best dressed individual rider and bike helmets for the two runners-up.

Entrants for the Team and Individual prizes will need to register at Belmore Park where the judging panel will take note of your outfit. You will also need to make it to lunch at Red Cedar Flat where the winners will be announced.

So onya bike for the biggest and best 'Gong Ride yet. The *Repco Freewheeling to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride* is open to people of all ages but for legal reasons children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. The ride is run with the co operation of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Police, Wollongong City Council and the Council of the City of Sydney.

## Official Ride Shirt

You may order the official ride shirt on the entry form for pick up on-the-day. Don't send your money now you will need to pay on pick up. We strongly advise that you pre order as un-ordered stock on-the-day will be limited.


This years ride shirt will feature a two colour design on a bright yellow cotton shirt. Sizes available: 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22. Cost \$9.50

## Refunds

No refunds can be made after the close of entries on November 1st as all travel tickets, food and information package materials have to be ordered and paid for after that date. All applications for refunds should be made in writing.

**Official entry forms can be obtained from the last issue of *Freewheeling*, your local Repco bicycle dealer or from the *Freewheeling* office Rm 57, 2nd floor, Trades Hall, Dixon & Goulburn Sts., Sydney.**

**A collection box will be placed at Clarence Street Cyclery until November 11 for non-late entries. In-person late entries (\$9.50) will be accepted at the *Freewheeling* office from November 7 to November 22 and at Belmore Park on the day.**



**TRAVELLING ADVENTURE**

Travel the world on a hand built Overlander from Christie Cycles. This go-anywhere machine is designed around a frame made from Reynolds 501 mountain bike tubing for extra stiffness and durability.

The 26 x 1 3/8" tyres are available anywhere on the globe so international repairs are a breeze. Only the best equipment is used: SunTour sealed bearings and gears; Sugino cranks; Araya alloy rims and Nagoaka alloy racks front and rear. The Overlander is exclusive to Christie Cycles.

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# NEW



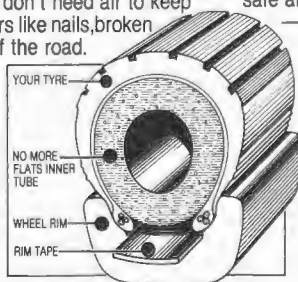
## Now cycle anywhere and never get a puncture.

### Amazing new inner tube simply can't go flat.

Here's a new inner tube you never need to repair, because nothing can make it go flat. It's easy to see why. Look at the drawing. New 'No More Flats' are hollow tubes of tough, resilient, smooth-riding rubber. They don't need air to keep them firm, so normal dangers like nails, broken glass etc. won't put you off the road.

### You'll never have to buy another tube.

'No More Flats' are guaranteed to last and that adds up to big savings. They help your tyres last longer too by keeping them at peak firmness.



### No more mending — no more pumping.

Fit 'No More Flats' and forget about all the old tube problems. Forget about glue and patches, and pumping, pumping, pumping; battling with tyres and tussling with spanners on cold winter nights. Now you're free from slow leaks and sudden stranding; free to ride safe and sound over jagged, metal, sharp stones etc. — if you must!

### Tested and praised by experts —

The Postmaster at Trangie in New South Wales, had 'No More Flats' fitted to all his Posties' bicycles — what greater test. Trangie streets are plagued with savage thorns called "cat heads" but even though they were forever puncturing normal tubes, they couldn't flatten "No More Flats".

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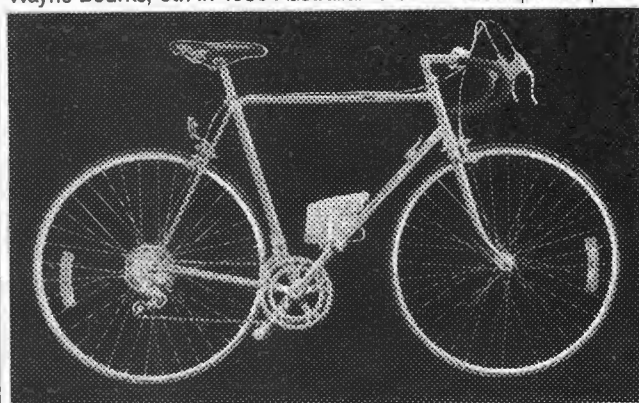
## ATTENTION TRIATHLETES



### THE RICARDO NEW 600 EX

NEW  
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- ★ Top of the Ricardo range superbly crafted ★ Full CRO-MOLY double butted frame and forks ★ (Seamless tubing)
- ★ Fitted with the exciting NEW SHIMANO 600 EX componentry
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- ★ Very close frame for fast responsible handling ★ Ridden by Wayne Bourke, 6th in 1985 Australian Triathlon Championships.



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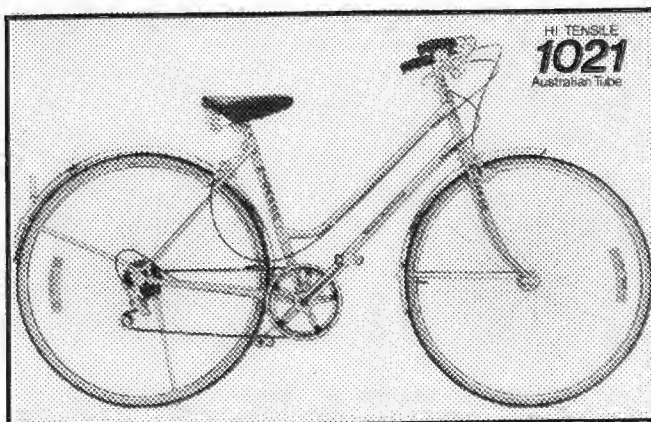
★ **WARNING:** When buying a CRO-MOLY cycle, enquire whether the cycle has full CRO-MOLY frame and forks.

**NEW**



### NEW 15 SPEED BUSHBIKE

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# *Penny-farthing cyclist sets new record.*

**Phil McDonald recently halved a one hundred year record for the fastest penny-farthing ride between Adelaide and Melbourne. Pat Cox accompanied him on his journey.**

On Monday morning the 29th April, 1985 at 9.3a.m. the Mayor of Adelaide, Wendy Chapman sent Phil McDonald, a brick and stone merchant from Lilydale, Victoria off from the Town Hall on his original 1880 penny farthing bicycle to ride to Melbourne and break the 100 year old record of eight days.

The previous day was spent with the South Australian Vintage Cycle Club in a park on the outskirts of Adelaide discussing the ride and its possible pitfalls. Most thought that fitness could possibly get the better of Phil who was aiming to do the ride in four days, two hours. Everyone agreed that the test could be day one and his journey through the Adelaide Hills and then to Tailem Bend for the overnight stop. A distance of 98 kilometres.

In brilliant sunshine he was escorted by a police motor cyclist up to the Toll House at the foot of the Adelaide Hills and was then told "You're on your own now, mate, good luck". Having endured the steep incline and steady traffic a much needed lunch break was taken at Hahndorf.

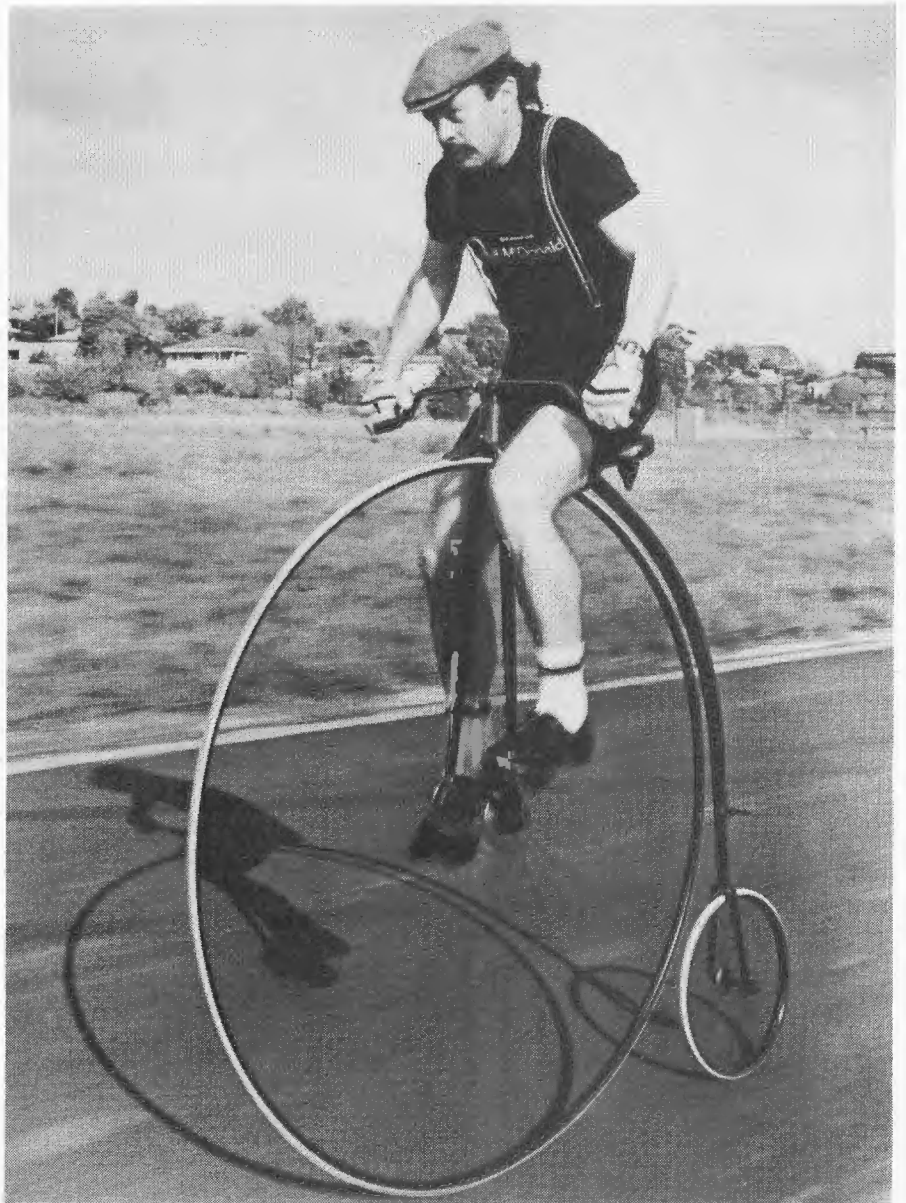
Phil was very fortunate in having Budget sponsor him and provide a luxury campervan for the trip. It enabled him to rest when required and of course good meals were always at hand. His crew consisted of two drivers, his brother-in-law, Terry Derham and friend, Dennis Hammond, and his secretary, Pat Cox, who looked after the publicity and accommodation on the way. Months of careful planning would have been wasted if anything happened to his historic cycle, so a spare penny farthing was loaned to Phil as a back-up.

During the afternoon a visit was made to a quarry at Kanmantoo and Phil was given some stone to bring back to his brick yard in Lilydale. A small trailer had been made for this purpose and was to be towed most of the journey. It proved hazardous and it was decided to abandon the idea and just concentrate on finishing the ride. Tailem Bend was reached at 6.30

p.m. and a well earned hot bath was welcome at the motel and a massage from Dennis who doubled as masseur and driver.

The second day's breakfast was taken at 4a.m. and the day's ride commenced at 5a.m. The forecast was for 30 degrees which was unusually warm for that time of the year. It was

therefore very important for Phil to have continual stops for drinks and for drinks to be passed to him while riding. A radio cassette was worn throughout the ride which helped to break the monotony. The country radio stations followed the ride and made motorists and residents aware of Phil's progress. Schoolchildren



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often lined the highway and sat for hours waiting to see the old bike and its rider pass by. Phil sometimes stopped for 15 minutes answering questions and explaining the bike.

At one stage Phil met up with the "Man from Wombat Creek" who is riding a horse around Australia. The second scheduled overnight stop was at Bordertown and the 176 km went without any traumas.

The third and most important day commenced at 5.40a.m. and it was decided to have breakfast after a couple of hours riding to try to save time. Just out of Bordertown roadworks made it very hard and probably contributed to a worn back tyre that had to be changed that night. It is amazing that such thin tyres could withstand the rough conditions without being changed more often. The front tyre saw the trip out without being changed. Incredible. The third day was probably the most difficult and Phil was getting very tired and sore. It was a long ride to Horsham and he arrived around 6.45p.m. to be greeted by the Mayor. 157 kilometres were covered on day three.

There were 187 kilometres to be ridden on the fourth day so the start was 3.55a.m. The crew had been invited to lunch at the Great Western

Hotel and a very big crowd of children from the local school and parents were there to greet Phil. After a talk about the bike to the children and a short spell for lunch it was on to Ballarat for the night and preparations to be made for the final day. Spirits were high with the thought of only 111 kilometres to go and the record broken.

Friday, 3rd May saw a start at 1.55a.m. from Ballarat. Permission had been granted to ride the freeway to Melbourne. The worst was behind Phil now and at Melton a police motor cyclist was there to escort him to Melbourne. Phil was also joined by his wife, Joan and his three children who took delight in following their father in the back up van. All soreness seemed to have left amid friends and lunchtime workers who arrived to welcome him. He was officially greeted by the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, Mr. Neil Trezise. It was then onto the Town Hall to deliver a letter to the Lord Mayor from the Lord Mayor of Adelaide.

A magnificent effort to ride a penny farthing from Adelaide to Melbourne in four days two hours. Average kilometres covered in an hour was eighteen.



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From the patented slant parallelogram mechanism on the rear derailleur to the uniquely cambered outer link plates on our chain, SunTour delivers maximum performance. With smooth reliability.

It's all a part of our philosophy "Design for Function." We do it without tricks or gimmicks. That's because we're in the business of building the best components available.

Cyclone is both ergonomic and economic, which means you can build or upgrade your entire bicycle at an affordable, human price. Experience Cyclone: the whirlwind that is SunTour.

Cyclone components are available individually or in specially selected groups. See your local dealer.







Approaching Mt Cook on Highway 80 beside Lake Pukaki. The colour of the lake water is caused by glacial flour (rock which is ground to powder by glacial action). The cyclists in the photo are two passing Californians. Our riders did not carry panniers.

# ***NZ South Island – A great place for a holiday***

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**Bicycle travel writer Ray Peace takes a break from his usual method of do-it-yourself touring and finds out what it is like to be looked after on a ride.**

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New Zealand and in particular the scenic South Island has been popular with cyclists worldwide for a number of years. The country has excellent camping facilities and Hostels for riders pedalling all the way around over several months. But for those unable (or unwilling) to indulge in this type of trip, shorter fully-supported tours are now being offered by a

number of Australian and New Zealand organizations.

Freewheeling was recently invited by the Auckland-based New Zealand Pedaltours and Air New Zealand to join a sixteen day tour of the South Island, with hotel/motel accommodation and a back-up vehicle. The tour, which was fully inclusive, cost ap-

prox. A\$1000 at current exchange rates.

The tour was run by Richard Oddy, a well-known Auckland cyclist responsible for "Southern Cyclist", New Zealand's only cycle-touring magazine, and part of the "North Island Cycling Guide" available in Australia. The tour was limited to a maximum of ten cyclists, this being



the number of bikes the organization's home-designed bike trailer could carry. In the event, five cyclists took part in the tour: Allan Blackman, a health planner from Seattle, USA; Janet Woodhouse, a therapist from Vancouver in Canada; Carolyn Heise and Bonnie Eliuk, also healthcare workers from Saskatoon and Winnipeg in central Canada, and Freewheeling's correspondent.

The tour started in February in the city of Wellington, at the southern tip of New Zealand's North Island. This was the departure point for the vehicular ferries across Cook Strait to the port of Picton. The crossing took three hours, and was followed by a short ride of 37 kilometres for the first day. Those taking part had the option of bringing their own bikes; Allan did so, while the three machines the girls "borrowed" courtesy Richard were reasonable. During the course of the trip three helmets and two cranksets were provided (and fitted) on request.

The first half of the ride, eight days, were concerned with crossing the northern tip of the South Island to the west coast, then south for 250 kilometres to Haast Pass, where the coastal Highway 6 turned inland to Wanaka and Queenstown. The tour progressed through a series of short runs on the bikes over the most scenic sections with longer, noisier interludes in the van.

The distances specified in the tour itinerary ranged up to 100 kilometres, but in practice most runs were much shorter. The North Americans, flying straight out of an icy winter, took a while to get back into top physical trim. The first day started gently with a run of 37 kilometres from Picton to the tiny town of Havelock along the beautiful shores of Queen Charlotte Sound. Dinner on this first night was something of a scratch meal, but all those that followed, including many picnic meals on the roadside, were uniformly good to excellent.

On paper, Day Two's 80 kilometres to the regional city of Nelson appeared reasonable, but in practice the terrain was less kind. The flat morning's run along the Pelorus river was a joy to all, especially the beautiful Pelorus Bridge reserve. But just before and after lunch the Rai Saddle and Whangamoa Saddle, 247 and 360 metres respectively, involved solid climbs. The girls conquered the former but thought better of the latter and jumped into the van, leaving Allan and I with a head-wind on the remaining 15 kilometres of coastal plain into Nelson.

Organized tours can suffer from having little or no free time to allow for the weather, but the notoriously

fickle South Island gave this tour warm, clear if sometimes sticky weather. The advantages of supported touring were fully evident on Day Three when the five of us were comfortably driven 95 kilometres from Nelson to Murchison, and over two formidable ranges, the 470 metre Spooner Range, and the 635 metre Hope Saddle, just before the junction with the Wairau valley road. The afternoon's ride was down to the coast through the spectacular Buller Gorge, including the well known Hawkes Crag, where the road has been cut into the rock face.

No rider actually covered the full 100 kilometres to the coal mining town of Westport on the coast, but the towering canyon walls were more than usual cause for lingering on the roadside. The one rider who did reach the lower part of the Gorge found it ill-advised to stop, as here the tiny but voracious sandflies began to attack. Insect repellent became an essential item up to Haast Pass.

Coastal scenery was the dominant attraction for the next few days. As the Pancake Rocks formation at Punakaiki were the most notable feature on the coast south of Westport we cycled the 58 kilometres to see them, and were then driven by Richard the remaining 45 kilometres to our overnight stop in Greymouth,

the largest town on the west coast with a population of 8,000.

On Day Five we hardly cycled at all, 30 kilometres on a flat straight coast road from Greymouth to Hokitika. The morning was spent at Shantytown, a repro 19th century gold town, while in the afternoon we skipped over an impossibly long distance, 145 kilometres, to our next port of call, Franz Josef.

The Pedaltours program allowed days off at several points for more detailed non-bike explorations. The five of us on the tour agreed later that the days off were in the right places. On Day Six we drove up the Franz Josef valley and walked 2 kilometres up to the terminal of Franz Josef glacier, which with Fox Glacier just down the road are the only temperate zone glaciers to come down to less than 400 metres above sea level, making them very accessible. The mighty river of ice and the milky glacial river it fed, full of powdered rock, made an impressive sight.

The following morning we cycled 27 kilometres over rugged and wooded hills to Fox township. In the afternoon we joined a guided walk up onto the Fox glacier itself, a chilly, slippery but highly enjoyable venture. On Day Eight we resumed progress south along the narrow coastal plain towards Haast. This part of New Zealand is sparsely populated, remote and, with the high mountains behind, very scenic.





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The group covered 50 kilometres before lunch, at a beautiful (and deserted) spot called Bruce Bay. Four cyclists pedalled a further 37 kilometres to the tiny Lake Moeraki, while one cycled through to the hotel at Haast, 122 kilometres from Fox. We stopped to look at the 730 metre long bridge over the Haast river, but not for long; the "South Island Cycling Guide" description of Haast as "Sandfly Capital of the World" was uncomfortably accurate.

On Day Nine we left the sandfly-infested jungles of the west coast behind at Haast Pass. Five riders pedalled along the flat 48 kilometres beside the Haast river to Pleasant Flat for an early lunch; one alone tackled the optional 8 kilometres extra to the top of the Pass. The altitude, 563 metres, was low, but most of this was packed into one horrendous 3 kilometre climb through "The Glades of Haast".

We hopped into the van to round off the day with an 85 kilometre drive to the town of Wanaka. The landscape became dramatically drier in the lee of the ranges, and parts of Highway 6 were really awful, rocky, corrugated gravel, coating the bikes with dust. The first big glacial lakes we had seen, Lake Wanaka and Lake Hawea (with "Lake Have-a-Look-out" according to Janet) were really beautiful, back-dropped one one side by 3035 metre Mt. Aspiring. Dinner in Wanaka was a special event: Carolyn's 28th birthday, complete with cake and candles arranged in advance by the diligent Mr. Oddy.

Queenstown, one of the biggest and most popular tourist destinations in the South Island inevitably took a prominent place on the Pedaltours agenda. For the 1985/86 program of tours the three nights in Queenstown is likely to be extended to four. After climbing a local look-out near Wanaka we cycled around 56 kilometres on the low road (still Highway 6) to Cromwell. The landscape was desolate and rather boring, making us doubly glad of a powerful tail-wind. The old town of Cromwell is scheduled to be drowned in the next few years by a new hydro dam on the Clutha river.

We drove down Kawarau Gorge and into Queenstown by way of Arrowtown and Shotover Gorge. Arrowtown was a small, attractive and oft photographed old gold town, but highly commercialized. The rugged Shotover Gorge was more to our liking, even though on this trip we never got around to taking one of the famous jet-boat trips down the Shotover river itself.

The two and half days we had in Queenstown were put to good and quite varied uses, none of which had anything to do with cycling. Day 11 was mostly concerned with steam, with Allan and I taking a vintage train ride at Kingston, 45 kilometres south of Queenstown, in the morning while the girls went shopping.

This was followed by a vintage steam-boat trip to a sheep-station across Lake Wakatipu, which Queenstown and the aptly-named Remarkable Range both adjoin. The S.S. Earnslaw, we discovered, had been launched on the same day in 1912 as the S.S. Titanic. The next day Allan decided not to join the four of us on a bus tour to Milford Sound, a return trip taking up the entire day covering 673 kilometres by road.

The erratic Fiordland weather fortunately cleared long enough for us to admire the grandeur of the Sound, lined by 1700 metre mountains and glaciers rising directly out of the sea.

Bonnie and Carolyn considered the South Island's best-known Sound a high priority item and were pleased to have seen it at its' best.

The morning of Day 13 was spent having a final look at Queenstown. We took the famous cable-car up to Skyline restaurant, then hiked up to Ben Lomond for a panoramic view of Queenstown, the Remarkables, Lake Wakatipu, the Shotover Gorge and Coronet Peak, one of the local ski fields. Bonnie chickened out of this trip and Carolyn, nervous about heights, showed some trepidation with good reason; two nights previously ten of the gondolas had crashed into the lower terminal.

In the afternoon Allan and the girls pedalled out for a second look at Arrowtown while I pedalled through the rugged Kawarau Gorge to Cromwell, a surprisingly easy 61 kilometres. At this point the Pedaltours Mazda stepped in again to

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spare us the 115 kilometres to Omarama, our next overnight stop. In doing so we avoided a lot of tedious country on either side of 971 metre Lindis Pass, and entered the high plains "Mackenzie Country", noted for sheep stations and hydro dams.

With the end of the guided tour now approaching all the riders were obviously much fitter and prepared to tackle longer distances. We decided to ride from Omarama to The Hermitage, at the base of Mt. Cook, just over 100 kilometres. The first 40 kilometres up to and through the hydro town of Twizel were flat and desolate, though surrounded by impressive mountains.

But we could already see the white massif of Mt. Cook ahead of us. After a low range of hills (an ancient glacial moraine) we cycled north beside the milky waters of Lake Pukaki. Lunch was at Glentanner, at the head of the lake only 23 kilometres from The Hermitage. But here the powerful tailwind we had been enjoying abruptly turned on us, making for heavy going although the snowy peaks around us were really awe-inspiring.

Day 15 was allocated as our final day off the road for exploration of the Mt. Cook area. It was suggested that a scenic flight would be worthwhile at this point, but despite the ample

reasons for such a trip all around and choice of services, walking, with our handle-bar bags doubling as day-packs, was the preferred mode of travel.

Despite grey skies and drizzle we drove up to White Horse Hill, site of the original Hermitage swept away by a flood in 1913, and walked 4 kilometres up the Hooker valley to the Hooker glacier terminal. Carolyn's fear of heights was more than justified by one of the suspension bridges over the Hooker river, a flimsy, thoroughly wobbly structure with a maximum rated load of one person. After lunch the weather closed in and we retreated to our motel.

Day 16 was inevitably something of a sad day with the trip over and our little group breaking up. Richard drove the van sans trailer up the Ball Hut road (which was pretty awful) so we could all take a short walk up to the Tasman glacier terminal. We had a pleasant picnic morning tea beside a small lake which had several icebergs drifting around it. The summit of Mt. Cook was shrouded in clouds.

The trailer hooked on back at The Hermitage, we drove back down the length of Lake Pukaki. On the far side of the dam wall (Pukaki's level has been raised) we began a final two-

wheeled foray over 45 kilometres to Lake Tekapo. For the first time since Havelock on Day One we found a non-highway route, a road which followed a canal between the two lakes, supplying water to Tekapo A power-station. This was completely flat, but the strong north wind threw us around on some exposed sections.

After a late lunch in Tekapo we took a look at the Church of the Good Shepherd on the lake-shore, a stone chapel with a panoramic view over the lake and the mountains. The bikes were secured with toe-straps to the rubber mounting posts for the final drive down to Christchurch, which took three hours.

Apart from the convenience of having air services to other New Zealand centres and Australia, Christchurch made an appropriate endpoint for the trip as the city most attuned to cycling in New Zealand. Being the only totally flat city in New Zealand undoubtedly helps, but all the same the city's cathedral, parks and cycle-paths made for a pleasant day's exploration prior to flying home.

The New Zealand Pedaltours South Island tour involved a total distance over the 16 days, or the 12 that involved cycling, of 700-900 kilometres. The 70 kilometre per day average was

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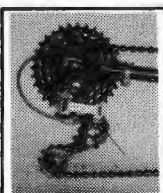
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Entering Mt Cook National Park tour leader Richard Oddy (in front) taking a rare break from driving the back-up van.

mostly acceptable given the rapid variations in terrain we met, and rapid variations in climate we thankfully didn't meet.

While the self-imposed limits on numbers inevitably limit the scope of NZ Pedaltours' operations (the two partners responsible for the tours both have full-time jobs in Auckland), it also allowed a degree of flexibility which to a large degree "personalized" the tour. As we and the tour organizer shared the same motel apartments feedback was constant, and amendments to the ride program took place on a nightly basis.

The standard of accommodation used was good, and the luxury of being able to relax at the end of each day in comfortable, civilized surroundings was much appreciated. This was particularly so on the west coast, where the thought of seven nights with a tend full of sand-flies was hardly appealing.

While the Pedaltours journey allowed us few opportunities to linger (as we would have liked to in many places) we found it a moderately economical way of seeing the best attractions of the South Island in a limited time. New Zealand is, for most Australians, the nearest and cheapest of overseas destinations. It is also spectacularly beautiful and highly hospitable to cyclists, and well worth a look for anyone with a bicycle and a few weeks' holiday to spare.

## TRIP DETAILS

**New Zealand Pedaltours** will be running camping, youth hostel and hotel/motel cycle tours in both North and South Island over the 1985/86 summer season. Fully supported tours are available from 10 days' duration up to 37 days, with prices from NZ\$599. Further details on New

Zealand Pedaltours can be obtained from: AUSTRALIA

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**Airlines:** Air New Zealand and also Qantas have regular flights from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth to Auckland, where Air New Zealand has connecting flights to all major North and South Island centres. Flight times from all ports except Perth are under four hours to Auckland. Airfares are about A\$440 return.

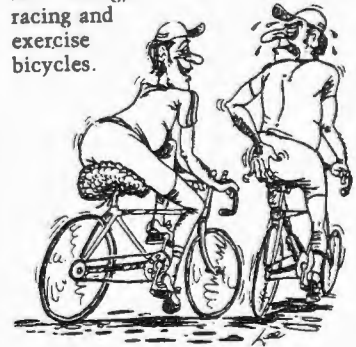
**Bicycles & General:** New Zealand quarantine requires that bicycles and any camping equipment must be free of soil, plant or animal matter before entering the country. Air New Zealand requires the removal of pedals and reduction of pressure (not complete deflation) in tyres. Removal of fragile and/or vulnerable items, e.g. lights, counters and cycle-computers is recommended.

Cyclists should note that Air New Zealand does not normally charge for the carriage of accompanied bicycles, even where the weight of the bicycle and other baggage exceeds the standard 20 kg limit. Climate conditions for cycling in the December/March peak period in the South Island are usually good, with day temperatures in the mid-20's and humidity much lower than in Auckland's sub-tropical environs. Weather conditions can however vary rapidly for the worse, particularly on the West Coast which receives up to five metres of rain per year.

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The map shows a circular route starting and ending in Melbourne. The stops and distances are as follows:

Stop	Date	Distance from Previous Stop (Km)
Melbourne	Dec. 8	-
Sunbury	Dec. 7	48 Km
Daylesford	Dec. 6	90 Km
Maryborough	Dec. 5	67 Km
Bendigo	Dec. 4	81 Km
Rushworth	Dec. 3	89 Km
Benalla	Dec. 1	48 Km
Beechworth	Nov. 30	88 Km
Wedonga	Start Nov. 30	42 Km
Shepparton	Dec. 2	78 Km
Melbourne	Dec. 8	48 Km

You don't really know Victoria until you have crossed it by bike. It is something you will remember for a lifetime. This experience will re-awaken your senses to the sounds and sights of the countryside. You can't smell the gums or hear a lamb bleating through the windows of a fast moving car. Nor can you socialise with fellow road users or know the joy of finding a drink stop amongst the hills on a warm day.

The Caltex Great Victorian Bike Ride is a leisurely ride along quiet rural roads. It is NOT a race. It is not an easy ride but last year 2,000 people of all ages and backgrounds completed the journey and loved it.

Your standard entry fee includes breakfast only. Due to lack of shops and the large number of people on the ride it could be difficult for you to obtain lunch or dinner at some locations, so we have arranged a pre pay system. This will guarantee you wholesome lunch and dinners professionally catered with minimum delays. You must mark your entry form accordingly and pay the adjusted amount as indicated to take advantage of this offer.

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## Dinner

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Additional cost of lunch and dinner is \$55.00.

**Send your completed  
form with remittance to:  
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Please use block letters.

Given Name

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Address

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Signature of participant (or parent/guardian if the entrant is under 18 years).

If you are under 15 years of age you must be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for you. Please state name and address of adult:

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### All meals

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# The 1985 Caltex Great Victorian Bike Ride

## A New End — A New Beginning

**By Graham Rebbeck Ride  
Organiser**

In Melbourne, cycling is about to make more noise than ever before. Currently two top radio stations are vying to out-do each other in the bicycle promotions area.

Sponsor of the Caltex Great Victorian Bike Road, 3AW, have launched cycling's biggest on air campaign bringing the message to hundreds of thousands of listeners on Melbourne's number one station. In the meantime Australia's biggest ever metropolitan ride is about to be launched on rival station The Fox FM which claims to have a bigger share of the cycling public. This metropolitan ride scheduled for October 27th takes in some of Melbourne's best scenery along the Yarra and some of the city's most challenging bicycle routes along the Merri Creek. The path varies from good to non existent but is soon to be opened by Prime Minister Bob Hawke and will be well tested by the 7,000 cyclists expected to take part in the event.

Your around-the-city event has turned into more of a carnival than a bike ride nowadays and the Melbourne ride sponsored by Lipton in conjunction with The Fox is no exception. Entertainment at the conclusion of the ride will include the running of the final of the Sun Tour, bands, bike displays, personalities, competitions and give aways. Entry forms will be distributed around the Melbourne area in bike shops and supermarkets as well as being printed in the papers.

Organisers of the Caltex Great Victorian Bike Ride meantime have done some agonising on the entry into Melbourne this year. Although the ride down the freeway would be hard to top as a spectacle cyclists did not appreciate the long waits in the hot sun which made it possible. With this in mind and also with last year's finishing point near the Yarra not being available the ride has been organised to follow the newly finished Moonee Ponds bike path which has been kindly lent to cyclists for the day.



The prize for a lucky Caltex Great Victorian Bike Ride entrant this year. The bike, a Repco Le Mans with touring gear was given to keen runner and cyclist Michelle Quigley to test pedal.

Here entrants will have a chance to pick their souvenirs and luggage before locating family or heading off for the train.

Entries for the event have been coming in so fast there could be up to 7,000 applicants however only 3,000 will be accepted. Bike ride coordinator Graham Rebbeck reports that there has been a steady demand from Sydney cyclists responding to the

story in the last issue of *Freewheeling* and arrangements will be made for a concessional train fare to the start. Entrants from Sydney or NSW should send in their entry form to the address in Melbourne and then contact the Bicycle Institute of NSW regarding train travel arrangements.

Entry forms have been hard to come by outside Victoria so *Freewheeling* has printed one in this issue.

# Towards a National Bicycle Committee

The Hawke Federal came to power with a policy positive towards the needs of bicycle users. The Bicycle Federation believes that the Feds need to set up a national co-ordinating body as an essential means of implementing that policy. Bicycle advocate Alan Parker outlines the cyclists proposals.

The Bicycle Federation of Australia is trying to persuade the Federal Office of Road Safety of the need to set up a National Bicycle Committee (NBC).

The long term goal of the NBC would be to ensure that the Commonwealth would do what it ought to and can do, to look after Australia's 3½ million cyclists, over the next ten years. In the short term it would provide a medium for interstate liaison and ensuring that the best statewide programs were adopted in other states.

## Simplistic Policies a Constraint to be Overcome

State and Commonwealth Governments seem to be preoccupied with the negative aspect of bicycle accidents, and simplistic solutions such as compulsory bicycle helmet wearing. The BFA must ensure that government properly considers those measures that prevent accidents from happening in the first place by changing poorly conceived safety policies and ensure that the positive contributions of bicycling as a means of transport recreation and touring are also given proper consideration.

If the NBC is going to benefit Australia, we have to sell Governments on the benefits of cycling; to conserve liquid fuels, reduce air pollution and noise levels, and increase the physical fitness and health of the population.

We can see that in countries such as Holland and Japan that bicycles are not only used in for recreation, but make a major contribution to the efficient operation of the country's economy as a low-cost means of transport. The energy efficient bicycle can make a similar contribution to our economy, given adequate funding and planning. However, the first task is to

demolish the myth that cycling is inherently dangerous; put about by some government agencies who use the myth as an excuse for not doing anything that promotes or encourages bicycle use.

## Bicycle Use is Increasing and the Fatality Rate is Falling Here and Elsewhere

Cycling is becoming safer and the fatal accident rate per unit of population has fallen over the last twenty years. Bicycle use in Australia has been steadily increasing since the early 70's, and the bicycle fatality rate per unit of population is now at the same level as the early seventies.

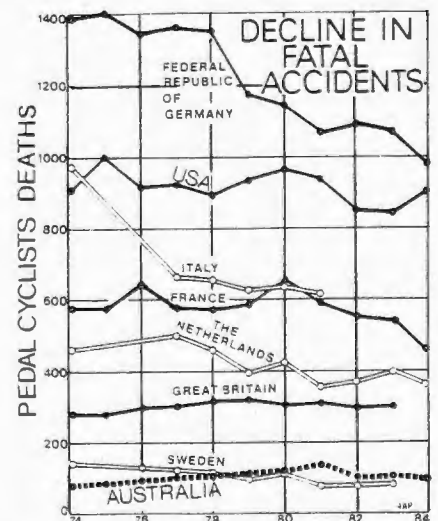
Australian bicycle sales have increased dramatically over the past ten years, and there has been no significant increase in fatalities.

Some government agencies have stated that the number of recorded non-fatal accidents have increased, but this is not a real increase; merely that more minor accidents are reported than before, due to improvements in the accident reporting system. It therefore follows that as the fatality rate per 1,000 person population remains fairly constant, there is no objective reason for us to go along with safety issues as the only major issue of concern. Safety does concern the BFA, because the cycling death rate is not dropping as fast as it is for motor vehicle users; but this is not a sufficient reason to bias the work of the NBC exclusively toward safety over the next decade.

## Overcoming the Safety Backlog in the Short Term

To bring the bicyclist fatality rate down in line with the recent reduction in motor vehicle fatality rates, the Commonwealth will have to do much

more. The BFA's concern is to catch up and overcome the backlog of previous neglect, and this will require some expensive safety research. For example, in depth bicycle accident studies are urgently required like those conducted in the United States (Cross, K.D. 1978). As this kind of



The comparative fatality rates shown above show that the fatal bicycle accident rate figures have dropped in Australia over the last 20 years, but are significantly higher than in the US and Britain. The overall improvement in the death rate per 100,000 population is due to overall improvements in the road safety support system provided for all road users. The slight increase in the figure below in the absolute number of Australian cyclists killed is due to the large increase in bicycle users, and an 8% population growth rate compared to approximately 1% growth in Europe.

1. Road Research — Safety of Two Wheelers — OECD March 1978
2. Cycle and light powered Two Wheeler Accidents EEVC, September 1984.
3. Fatal Accident Reporting System, NHTSA US Dept. of Transport 1983.
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Compiled from several documents.



research is too expensive (\$300,000) for State Governments to undertake and of national significance, the Federal Office of Road Safety (Mr Morris' portfolio needs to commission such indepth studies.

Recent data of bicycle accidents in poor lighting conditions also need to be the subject of some indepth research, as these are responsible for nearly half the adult fatalities. Product safety studies on bicycle lighting, braking systems and bicycle helmet ventilation are other worthwhile areas of research for the Commonwealth.

### **Federal Government Support for Cycling in the United States of America**

Overseas, some cyclist/bureaucrats and cycling lobbyists have been very successful in selling the benefits of cycling to the government. It would be wise for the Commonwealth to consider positive overseas examples. The United States Environmental Protection Agency has some practical ideas on the use of bicycles to reduce air pollution (caused mainly by motor vehicles' exhaust fumes) which is also a major problem in state capital cities of Australia. A six year old report states:-

*Increasing bicycle use has obvious appeal as an air quality measure for several reasons. First, since trips made by bicycles do not result in hazardous emissions, every bicycle trip which substitutes for auto travel results in cleaner air. Bicycle strategies generally appear to be among the most popular transportation measures, when instituted. This is not surprising since many riders say a major motivation for using a bicycle is for enjoyment, and because bicycle riding provides an opportunity for physical exercise at the same time a trip is made. Other appealing features of bicycle strategies, include energy conservation through reduced demand for gasoline. In addition to conservation, bicycle riders save money they would otherwise pay for gas. Finally, in some situations, such as congested downtown areas, bicycle travel is faster than car travel. (US EPA 1979).*

Similar studies have been made in West Germany and there is a need for a national bicycle study to be made in Australia and for Minister Morris to have his Bureau of Transport Economics undertake this work.

### **Bicycle Federation of Australia Short List of Cyclists' Priorities**

The Bicycle Federation of Australia can credibly argue that it represents all non-competitive cyclists. Member groups that constitute the Bicycle Federation of Australia are primarily community groups that directly repre-

sent adult non-competitive cyclists, but also speak indirectly for the great majority of cyclists, and try as best they can to represent the interests of child cyclists. Nearly all BFA cycling groups are represented on the State Bicycle Committees, and are heavily involved in their decision-making processes. The following list is what the Commonwealth could do in broad principles, it is derived from the experience gained by cycling representatives working with their State Bicycle Committees.

#### **Overall Planning Philosophy**

Accept the fact that cyclists mostly use roads and adopt the "integrated approach" to bicycle planning, which is widely accepted in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. The integrated approach is summarised in the mnemonic of the 4 E's, that is — Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Encouragement. The key to bicycle safety lies in improvements to the existing road system, and improving the behaviour of all road users, especially if more recreational paths are built, which encourage bicycle riding and will as a consequence generate bicycle traffic on the rest of the road system. The bicycle paths that are of most use to utility cyclists are those that either provide "short cuts" or bridge barriers to give continuous routes on low traffic volume streets, or bypass "pinch points" and dangerously narrow kerbside lanes on main roads. In other words, the main purpose of bicycle paths is to better enable cyclists to use the existing road system, which has cost billions to construct and maintain, and to which cyclists have legal rights of access.

#### **Organisation and Funding**

Establish a properly constituted National Bicycle Committee (NBC) in Canberra, whose Chairperson reports directly to the Minister for Transport. The NBC would be provided with adequate support services as a standing committee of government, and a budget of \$1 million per annum to fund bicycle projects and research of national significance.

#### **Bicycle Service Organisations**

The Commonwealth should recognise the need to help cyclists to help themselves, by assisting the organisations that would encourage more people to cycle, provide insurance, legal aid, touring advice and generally represent the interests of cyclists to all levels of government.

For a few years, the BFA will need some financial assistance with travel expenses if it is to properly par-

ticipate in the decision-making processes of a National Bicycle Committee.

#### **The Commonwealth's Enforcement Role**

To encourage the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Road Research Board to do the necessary research.

Overseas evidence is available to show the need to more rigorously enforce traffic laws, so as to remove dangerous drivers from the roads.

A road safety support system that is weak on law enforcement increases the risk of accidents for all road users, but is many times more dangerous for the unprotected bicyclists, particularly children. Knowing them, the BFA's policy is to promote the development of a legal/enforcement system that provides bicyclists with proper legal and police protection as vulnerable road users.

#### **The Commonwealth's Educational Role**

Accept as a matter of faith that the safe child cyclist of today is going to be the safe motorist of tomorrow, and develop statewide bicycle safety and education programs for children of all ages. The BFA advocates that a traffic safety education system develops, which, in the long term, will improve the on-road behaviour of all road users.

An on-going program of random breath testing coupled with the gradual introduction of a bicycle-oriented system of traffic safety education is the way to keep pushing the fatality rate down. Now that safety belts have been provided in cars, the design of cars and our roads have been greatly improved, and the number of road deaths in Australia has declined to what it was in 1958, we should be developing a traffic safety education system that will reduce the 2,768 deaths in 1983 to less than 2,000 by the year 2000, no matter what increase in the population. The BFA would like to see the appropriate Commonwealth departments involved in traffic safety and for the NBC to act as catalysts in the traffic safety education field.

#### **Commonwealth's Encouragement Role**

There is a need to provide adequate funding so as to encourage bicycle commuting and utility cycling in general by developing adult cycling/fitness programs in conjunction with the Commonwealth Ministry for Sport & Recreation and/or the Commonwealth Health Commission.

The most suitable course for this purpose (HAHN. S.S. 1983) was

developed by an American educational innovator and expert cyclist, John Forester. Forester's "Effective Cycling Course."

It is recommended that this course be developed by a Commonwealth agency for the purpose of adoption nationwide. A unique Australian course that fulfills the same function would be equally effective.

Perhaps the most important Commonwealth Encouragement role is to involve other agencies, and to ensure that the best planning and implementation measures developed by particular states are adopted by others.

### Commonwealth's Engineering Role

One of the major problems facing all cyclists today is the appalling conditions of many main roads. A major physical constraint to the growth of adult bicycle usage is the lack of bicycle safety features on main roads, especially on roads with high speed, heavy vehicles, and narrow kerbside lanes or kerbside lanes with dangerous shoulders and broken edges. Main road intersections with high speed left turning lanes or slip roads are especially dangerous.

What can be done on main roads in Australia for cyclists can be experienced today in California. In California, the main road authority has developed cost-effective ways of catering for bicycle traffic that are detailed in the California Highway Design Manual (CALTRANS 1982). In

particular, the provision of 3,500 kilometres of sealed shoulders on rural roads and rural type roads in urban areas has greatly encouraged adult bicycle usage in California, particularly bicycle touring on inter-city highways. The opening of 1,500 kilometres of sealed freeway safety lanes for use by cyclists has also benefited cyclists greatly.

Full-depth sealed shoulders are economical because over a ten year period, they pay for themselves in reduced road edge maintenance. It is well known that trucks do most damage to roads, and having trucks' wheels running two metres away from the edge prevents the edges breaking up.

We would require Minister Morris' Ministry to provide additional funds to the Australian Road Research Board to do the following.

- Make a comparative study of Victorian and Californian road conditions and the potential economic savings of providing full-depth and other forms of sealed shoulder treatments in Australia.
- Establish technical, legal and safety guidelines for opening freeways for cyclists.

The basic problem again is the simplistic attitudes of Australia-wide and state road building agencies that deny cyclists their legitimate rights of access to the road which is right and proper, given the bicycle's status as a road vehicle in Common and Statute Law.

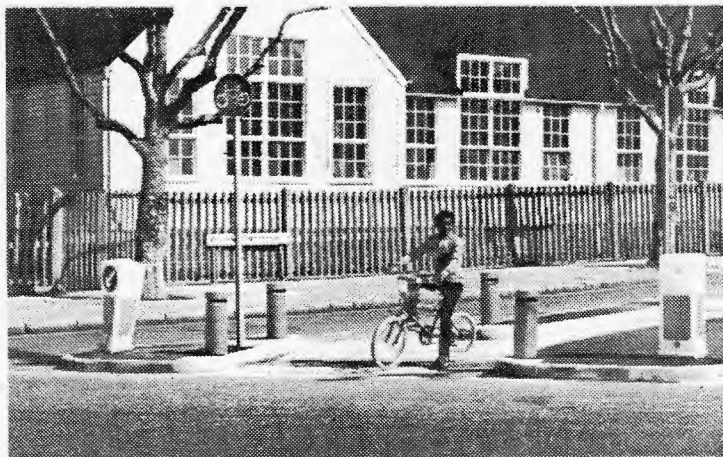
State agencies that are responsible for regulating the introduction of traffic management schemes, also discriminate against cyclist and ignore the safety needs of child cyclists. There is a need to ensure that local area traffic management devices are subject to design standards that allow cyclists convenient and legal access to roads that are modified to block or reduce motor traffic, or reduce the speed of motor vehicles.

So far the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) and State traffic authorities have ignored cyclists' needs and approve installations that discriminate against the needs of cyclists, particularly local child cyclists.

### Other Issues of Concern

The BFA notes with some concern that there is no statement of the need to do any of the following, in Commonwealth transport policy:

- To evaluate the implementation of metropolitan and local area bicycle plans that have been completed and are of special merit. To evaluate other bicycle planning studies of national significance that have been implemented.
- To provide research funding for the preparation of national design and planning guidelines for bicycle planning, facility design, route mapping and the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities. Badly designed bicycle paths built with



According to the ARRB there are over 50 different traffic management devices and many of these need to be modified to allow cyclists legal access through them. Priority treatments are also important to protect low stress bicycle routes, as they are in the United Kingdom, as shown in the photograph. Sometimes space limitations will not allow some of these devices to be modified, however, many of the devices this writer has inspected could have been modified as

shown. Most of these devices installed to date make no provision for cyclists.

Road closures narrowed exits and entries can easily be modified to allow the safe and legal passage of bicycles. Fourway intersection treatments really slow cars down in the residential street grid and are accepted in nearly all American States. Entry control signs, with exception plates for bicycles like the contra-flow bike lanes have proved successful in the UK. Low and medium stress

route networks, that heavily utilize the residential street system have been recommended in the Bikeplans for Newcastle, Geelong, Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth, but no adequate guide exists on how best to protect these cycle routes. The Commonwealth has a role in ensuring that in any future work the ARRB does on local area traffic management, cyclists needs are taken into account. Photos: Courtesy of Greater London Council





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JOLORS and CEP funding are the norm and not the exception in Australia, and bicycle path design and construction standards are urgently required.

- to provide research funding to show how bike/train bike/express-bus and bike/ferry trips can substitute for long urban car trips. The Australian Railway Research & Development Organisation (ARRDO) needs to receive additional funding from Minister Morris' Ministry for this purpose.
- To encourage state and local planning agencies to assist builders, architects, developers, owners and managers of buildings, commercial and shopping complexes to provide secure storage facilities for cyclists. Develop and model planning ordinances to ensure the long term provision of storage facilities are provided as a matter of normal procedure throughout Australia.

cyclists will continue to do most of their cycling no matter how many bicycle paths are built.

The Bicycle Federation of Australia which initiated the proposal for a National Bicycle Committee (NBC) would like the Federal Minister for Transport to announce the formation of the NBC at the Bicycle Planning Conference in March 1986. Cyclists would then have a properly constituted means of communication with the Commonwealth on all matters of national significance.

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## Conclusion

Over the next decade there is a lot that can be done to preserve cyclists' rights of access, to improve the road behaviour of all road users and to improve the road environment on which

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Richard cycling past Lake Eyre. Photograph: Ian Grayson.

# *Cycling the Oodnadatta Track*

**The town of Marree in South Australia is at the junction of two tracks- the Birdsville track which heads for Queensland, and the Oodnadatta track which heads for the Northern Territory past the salty shores of Lake Eyre South. Richard Flanagan and Ian Grayson recently travelled the Oodnadatta Track and provide this insight into cycling in the dry centre of Australia.**

Tracks are unlike highways, which often seem as if they are built to put a straight line on a map. Rather, tracks tend to follow the natural contours of the land, and in arid areas they meander from waterhole to waterhole.

The Oodnadatta track had its origins as a migratory route for the aboriginals, following a series of springs, known as mounds springs, they are natural water outlets from the Great Artesian Basin. This source of water led early explorers

such as Eyre and Stuart along the same route. The European explorers were followed by settlers with stock, then came Afghanis with their camels carrying the settlers' supplies. Thus the track was firmly trodden into permanent existence.

We felt that a track which was created in such a way would provide a cycling route with much historic and scenic interest, not to mention an adequate water supply.

Neither of us had experienced long distance dirt road touring, but we didn't allow this to intimidate us, knowing that there was an adequate supply of water in springs, bores and dams to sustain us even if we only covered 50m kilometres a day. Our average turned out to be more like 75 kilometres.

Although we felt it possible to do this 1000 kilometres of dirt road (inclusive of the dirt stretches before and after the track) at a good time of the year (May),



motorists who claimed experience of the tack did not allow us to feel compacent. In fact we were made to feel quite ridiculous for considering such a journey. We have since learned that advice from motorists about track conditions is most unreliable. Almost all are unaware of a bicycle's versatility and capability.

It was an exhilarating experience to finally get on the track and find quite a fast dirt road. This certainly did deteriorate - some sections were daunting, but nothing like the horror stories we had heard.

We soon discovered that cycling in close proximity to one another on such a surface was a hazard. Much weaving across the track was necessary in search of strips of good riding surface - this is much harder if you are getting in each other's way. Also having the whole desert to yourself (dirt roads increase this impression, blending better with the scenery) is quite an experience on its own. Moving at around 15 kilometres per hour you experience subtle changes in vegetation and perspective as you quietly feel your way along this silent winding track. It is nothing like the noisy, enclosed, hasty experience that cars give.

The search for signs of water adds another dimension to your observation

of the environment. Living in it, you are part of it.

### Water is Life.

At Alberrie Creek, 50 kilometres from Marree, we met a group of environmentalists who are staying on the vast Finnis Springs station as guests of the Aboriginal owners. They made us feel very welcome and showed us around some of the local mound springs. These were quite spectacular - particularly Davenport and Hermit Hill springs.

The greenery and birdlife surrounding the springs, in stark contrast to their arid rocky setting, make it quite obvious what water means in the desert - life itself. The reason for the group's presence here is quite alarming.

If Roxby Downs uranium mine (over 100 kms south of the track) enters full production, it will require 33 million litres of water per day, making it the single largest industrial user of underground water in Australia. It plans to pump this water from the vicinity of the mound springs. This will dry out some springs by Roxby's own admission and seriously deplete others.

A tribute to the importance of these mound springs is that the area has been nominated by the Australian Conservation Foundation for World

Heritage listing. For us the spring water was essential for our trip.

It seems pure folly to consume this precious finite resource to process uranium, when water is obviously the most valuable resource in this driest of lands.

### Lake Eyre - A Sea of Salt.

From Alberrie Creek we set off towards Lake Eyre. This vast salt pan full of water and teeming with fish and birdlife only a year ago, following one of its rare fillings after heavy inland rains, is now dry. It is now a reflective shiny surface spreading to the horizon. It is quite visible from the road and a signposted side road goes to the shore. You can easily walk out on to it.

It is a funny feeling to think that so far inland you are cycling 12 metres below sea level and it is uphill to Darwin!

The track here diverts briefly from its general south-north direction in order to negotiate the lake's southern shores. It was on this short stretch that we had our only experience of a powerful headwind.

Prevailing winds come from the southeast - a great help to the cyclist. We would advise anyone interested in cycling the Oodnadatta track to ride south-north between late April and August. Temperatures and flies increase dramatically during the summer months - not to mention the summer rains which turn the track to mud.

Flies were a nuisance as it was anyway, Ian regarded his fly net as essential, negotiating a dirt road required more concentration than a sealed road. Swatting flies from your eyes can make handling much more difficult as both hands are needed on the bars. You also have to be careful for your eyes. Since the coming of cattle, and hence plague proportions of flies, the Aboriginals have experienced severe eye problems as they live mostly out of doors.

We cycled on from Lake Eyre until we were adjacent to Hamilton Hill. In order to seek out the 'Bubbler' we took a side track. We'd heard about this amazing spring earlier - it looks like a bubbling quicksand. If you are game enough to walk in you wont sink, the water jets buoy you up. Here we replenished our water supply.

### The Abandoned Railway.

It was on this stretch past Hamilton Hill that we first had to push our bikes any distance. We encountered a one kilometre stretch of sand too deep for riding. Along the whole track we would only have pushed our machines a total of about 3 kilometres. It never seemed as if progress would be impossible, partly because we were aware that



the road constantly changed. After the push the road improved dramatically and we got a good rhythm going, thoroughly enjoying riding into a spectacular sunset.

Soon after sunset we arrived at Coward Springs – a virtual explosion of vegetation in desert surrounds. A couple of derelict buildings are deteriorating remnants of the re-routed old Ghan Railway – the remains of which can be seen much of the length of the track. (Heat splintered and decaying sleepers cooked us many a meal en route!).

After sleeping amongst these decaying relics dawn revealed this place as an inland estuary teeming with birdlife. We later discovered there had once been plans to convert it to a health resort, the artesian flows being the attraction. Its remoteness however foiled the idea.

Again topping up our waterbottles we set off to William Creek.

William Creek is a pub similar perhaps to the famous Birdsville Pub: just a hotel in the middle of nowhere. It sells beer and junk food – interesting priorities. After having survived on rice, porridge, lentils, powdered milk, dried fruit and nuts we just junked out like true consumer reactionaries and drank a few stouts to wash it all down.

Thus replenished and refreshed in such an obvious manner we cycled on into an area of golden sand dunes, stabilised by encroaching vegetation. A bit of pushing here but only for short stretches.

By now our loose surface riding technique, whether on dust or sand, had become quite refined. Leaning down on dropped bars seems to enable you to quickly transfer your weight back, forth or sideways. This is of great assistance in keeping on top of the road surface particularly on the faster thinly crusted surface often found towards the side of the road. Maintaining speed is also a key factor. It's a case of sink or skim over the surface by maintaining your momentum.

Undulating dunes are easier than long flat sandy stretches in many ways. Apart from the joy of roller coasting over the crests it also assists keeping up speed for crossing the softer patches usually found in the dips.

Riding well on a tricky soft surface can be quite a satisfying art.

Our preferred camping spots at night were dry sandy creek beds. They provided shelter from the winds and were often the only relief from rocky thorny terrain. After a hard days ride a good camp spot is essential. Without a good sleep each night cycling day after day can become a chore not a pleasure. Towards sunset we would often cycle

several kilometres further until we found a relaxing spot.

An element of risk exists however when sleeping in creek beds. Distant rains and flash floods can cause obvious dangers. By observing the lay of the land you can counter this.

Small creek beds from localised run-off are safer. One can anticipate local rain. Fortunately we encountered no rain and never put up our tents – a groundsheet and our sleeping bags (bearing in mind the freezing desert nights) were all that was needed.

### **Oodnadatta – not the end of the track!**

Towards Oodnadatta we crossed the Neales River now just a series of pools too salty to drink.

Stony surfaces of the track now turned into big rocky surfaces – a new hazard. We had been warned about the approach to Oodnadatta. Sand and dust require more from the rider but rocky surfaces really work it out of the machine. Spokes were groaning, rims were being bashed – everything vibrated and jarred. Unseen a pannier jumped off and had to be retrieved later some five kilometres back.

Upon arrival in the town we made a bee-line for the store and heartily gorged ourselves on fruit, milk, salad sandwiches, ice creams, iced finger buns, fruit juice and what ever we could until we were almost unable to move. Oh the trials of long distance cycling! We deserved it at least. We were

astounded to find that the store even had a couple of thornproof tubes.

Oodnadatta its self had a strange atmosphere. A town which was a major stop on the old Ghan railway was expected to “go ghost” after the line was dismantled. It continues to survive serving a small specialist tourist trade promoting the Simpson Desert as its attraction.

Like many outback towns the majority of the townspeople are Aboriginal. In marked contrast to Maree there is little evidence of Aboriginal ownership in the community. Although we stayed a couple of days to rest and recharge our energy we felt uncomfortable because of the very real feeling there of a people dispossessed and at a loss of what to do. It is not a simple matter but certainly an uncomfortable reminder.

The Oodnadatta track continues on for another 250 kilometres to join the still unsealed Stuart Highway. We considered a detour to the edge of the Simpson Desert in order to see the Dalhousie Springs, the largest thermal ponds in Australia. We could get no clear picture of the tracks in the area from motorists in the town so we rejected the idea. Vehicles in the area were rare and an emergency could prove awkward. We decided to keep to the Oodnadatta track. At least it was a morale boost to think that we were now going the easy way!

However our enthusiasm waned as the mechanical wear and tear on our

One of the streams coming out of Davenport Springs. (Photo: Richard Flanagan).



machines began to take its toll. Front pannier rack bolts were constantly coming loose and breaking. Forks flex but the frame does not. Bolts at the base of the rack therefore work loose or simply snap. Wheels needed trueing but the heavier gauge spokes on one machine (13g front, 12g back) needed less trueing than the 14 gauge stainless on the other.

Mechanical concern was accompanied by other irritants. Dust was a problem for Ian's eyes even with sunglasses. Goggles would have been better. The high evaporation in the area caused lips to dry out but even more unexpected fingertips cracked in the dryness.

For this trip only three things are required over and above normal touring equipment. One is a large water carrying capacity the others are hardy well-prepared wheels and thorn proof tubes.

We both carried around 10 litres of water. A canvas water bag strapped to the cross bar carried the bulk of our supply. We stabilised the bag in netting secured to the other frame tubes. A long flexible plastic tube inserted in the spout of the water bag is very useful for drinking directly from the bag and also for siphoning out water for cooking. The canvas bag cools and also seems to improve the quality of some of the more brackish water we occasionally had to use. Water bottles and cages were also attached to each bike.

The importance of strong wheels has already mentioned but it is worth noting that steel rims can be more easily reshaped in the outback than alloy. Thornproof tubes served us well. Both of us only experienced one puncture each. Vise grips are excellent for bush maintenance and a range of spares (such as back axle and chain) offer security.

Throughout the journey we never needed to flag down a vehicle for assistance or water. We carried the principle of self sufficiency inherent in our bicycling philosophy to its limits.

Vehicles are few on the track – about eight per day. There were just enough to provide us with a psychological safety net in case of a mishap and few enough not to impinge upon our sense of wilderness in the open desert landscape.

The feeling of space in the absence of vehicles is wonderful. What cyclist does not crave an open road?

### **Extinction is forever – Another cost of uranium?**

The track had deteriorated after Oodnadatta: it required even more concentration. Sometimes it was actually less effort to leave the track and cycle by its side on the shimmering gibber plains. These gibber plains

always seemed a mystery – flat polished stones sitting atop the flat sand. What formed them?

One evening we had company. Camped nearby in the bush were members of the Royal Geographical Society on a field trip. Much surprised we shared their campfire and their hospitality. They expressed disbelief and incredulity at our being in such a remote place on bicycles. Their attitudes reflected a general ignorance about these most efficient machines.

We discussed the desert springs and their conservation importance. The mound springs often referred to as oases in the desert also support flora and fauna found nowhere else in Australia or even in the world. Rare and unique grasses, freshwater snails and desert fishes, endemic and unique, live only here in the mound springs.

These highly specialised species, which apparently can not exist outside flowing artesian waters are the only living survivors of an ancient era when

**Ian having to push his machine near Hamilton Hill. (Photo: Richard Flanagan).**



the interior of the continent was much wetter than today. As such they are of immense scientific and conservation significance hence the World Heritage listing and the interest shown by the Royal Geographical Society.

Botanists and Zoologists have warned that any reduction of water pressure could wipe out their fragile ecosystems causing extinction of these rare species.

Meantime Roxby Downs continues to suck them dry with its huge thirst for water. If this is part of the price for the extraction of the Uranium – no thanks!

Our enthusiasm flagged due to the worsening condition of the last section of the track. We were down to covering only 65 km per day. The thought of completing this challenging journey kept our pedals going around.

With the springs no longer on the track wind pumped bores and stock dams were our main source of water. We called in at granite downs station near the track's end where a friendly old station hand let us have some tank water – the first we had for some time. When we made a comment on the flies the old hand retorted, "You should see them in summer mate! Ain't no use in swipin' 'em away. All you can do is breathe 'em in and spit 'em out."

Towards the Stuart Highway the track meandered through different country again past low flat topped hills called mesas. We slept in a creek bed amongst these ancient hills and contemplated the stars for the last time while we still had the peace of the track. In the clean clear air the stars shone in their full glory. The Milky Way seemed to pulsate with light and energy. This was the reason we were so reluctant to retreat to our tents.

The stars gave us very good company as our tired bodies rested but our minds still wandered the track. The Oodnadatta ride was for us an intense experience. For a while it was a very direct way of living and moving. Direct experience of this sort is something which is missing from most of our lives. We feel very lucky to have experienced it at all.

The end of the Track was not the end of the hard work. In some ways the last 120 kilometres of unsealed Stuart Highway was harder. More traffic, more dust, bigger corrugations, wide and sometimes very boring straight road. Our small experience of the Stuart convinced us we had taken the best route for the South Australian part of our Adelaide to Darwin journey. It certainly would be the most interesting way. But for all that we still yearned for the sealed Northern Territory road. It would be like floating on air after all of this.



## How smooth is your bike path?

All of the planning manuals say that a bike path should be "smooth" with out defining what they mean by that. In practice most bike paths are so rough that they are not worth riding on, if not initially, then later when the tree roots grow.

To provide an accurate assessment of bike path roughness Mark Wigan of the Australian Road Research Board is conducting a scientific study on some of Melbourne's paths to give engineers



Dr Mark Wigan of the Australian Road Research Board adjusts an accelerometer designed to measure the roughness of Melbourne's bike paths. In a pilot study earlier this year paths were tested using both fat and skinny-tired bikes.

the kind of information they can't ignore. The study has gone well so far but it has recently run out of money.

Freewheeling believes that such research is vital if the credibility of future bike path construction is to be maintained and urges the ARRB to get off its car seats and allow Mark to complete his study.



## Phil Anderson stars in Tooheys TV commercial

Phil Anderson, Australia's most famous cyclist has made his TV debut recently when he starred in one of the brewer Tooheys 'Sportsmen' series of television commercials.

Anderson is reported to be pleased with the result filmed on location in Switzerland during the Tour de Suisse which he also won. Phil who currently leads the World Riders Championships will return to his home country later in October at the end of his most successful European season. Phil Anderson finished fifth in this years Tour de France.

## New Zealand to run big pro/am stage race

New Zealand's largest manufacturer of bicycles the Healing company has won the rights to sponsor that country's biggest pro/am cycle race. The Healing Cycle Classic will kick off in Wellington on November 3 this year and will conclude in Auckland six days later days later.

The race will cover 1240 km and is expected to attract many of the top participants of the Commonwealth Bank Cycle Classic which concluded in Sydney on October 13. There are 14 stages comprising 30 town sprints, 18 hill climbs and three criteriums.

Teams from the USA, Japan, UK and Australia will compete against New Zealand's top riders. The race will be run under the auspices of the NZ Amateur Cycling Association and the race organiser is Bob Pratt of Wellington.

## Around Australia in 80 days

In our last issue we made mention of lone cyclist Ian Hay who set out around Australia to ride Highway 1 in eighty days. Ian, a member of the League of Victorian Wheelmen, rode a new Peugeot bicycle and though he averaged 200 km per day on it he had

## SYDNEY

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## CORRECTION

The Apollo Bicycle Company wishes to apologise to its dealers and customers for the incorrect mountain bike prices shown in the advertisement published in the last issue of Freewheeling. Due to the recent devaluation all prices shown on the old advertisement have been changed and customers should check with their Apollo dealer for an up to date listing.

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longer days in order to make up time lost during the journey. Ian made his triumphant return to Melbourne early in October finishing his gruelling journey on schedule.

### Feds fund new Melbourne busses and trams but bicycles get nix

The Federal Government is giving the Victorian State Government more than \$18 million for a new fleet of busses and trams. The gift only serves to highlight the ignorance of the transport planners and politicians who continue to pour funds into busses and trams when the rate of usage is only just greater than that of the bicycle.

A recent survey of Victorian workers showed that 2.1 percent of all trips to work were made by bicycle. Bus travel only accounted for 2.3 percent while the figures for tram travellers were the same as that of bicycle commuters. The Melbourne Tramways system is heavily subsidised and runs at a loss.

While the Feds pour funds into the Tramways system the numbers of people using that system to get to work continues to fall. On the other hand the Victorian State Government has recently cut the State Bicycle Committee's budget (\$1.8 million in 1984/5) even though bicycle usage is increasing apace.

### Perth Bikeplan comment period extended

Due to the late availability of the Main Report of the Perth Bikeplan the period for public comment has been extended to November 26.

The plan's recommendations include: the provision for \$533,000 worth of education and awareness programs over three years; Bike Ed to be taught in schools; Allocation of \$33,000 for the creation of a position of Police

Bicycle Co-ordinator; Compulsory bicycle registration should not be introduced; Bicycle encouragement programs worth \$67,000 in the first year to be started; Bike maps of the study area to be produced; Perth Bike Week to be launched; Use of bicycles instead of motor vehicles where appropriate to be encouraged within Government; Provision for secure parking facilities and bikes on public transport to be encouraged; Off-road engineering works worth \$2.8 million in the first year \$4.7 million for the next two years and \$6 million in the remaining four years to July 1995 to be implemented.

As well the study makes some far reaching recommendations on engineering aspects such as: Where cyclists are banned from roads the responsible road authority should ensure an adequate alternative is provided; Provision for cyclists in road maintenance and improvements in the kerb side lane; Better intersection controls to cater for bike riders; Off-road facilities designed to a suitable standard and a design manual to be produced.

Copies of the Bikeplan can be obtained from the Perth Bikeplan, 13th floor, Natwest House, 251 Adelaide Tce., Perth WA. Submissions should be directed to the Co-directors, Perth Bikeplan c/- Bicycle Policy Committee, Dept. of Local Government, 32 St Georges Tce., Perth WA 6000.

### Sydney Inner West Bicycle Transport Study

The State Bicycle Committee of NSW has announced that Ove Arup Transportation Planning has been appointed to carry out a bikeplan study to cover the Sydney suburbs of Ashfield, Burwood, Canterbury, Concord, Drummoyne and Strathfield.

The study area lies immediately to the west of the region covered by a previous plan which involved five inner city councils. This previous plan has now been consigned to the bottom drawers of the basement filing cabinets in some of the town halls. Unlike Melbourne the approach towards bicycle planning in Sydney has been piecemeal and poorly coordinated. The State Government continues ignore the need for a Sydney wide approach.

### SA Touring maps now on sale

The first of a series of South Australian Touring maps has now hit the streets. The first map covers the Barossa Valley Cycle Route and is printed in high quality colour on glossy paper.

The route map has been produced by a team of women riders working for the SA Dept of Recreation and Sport as part of a Community Employment Programme project to map the state. The map is based on the 1:100,000 topographical series and has contours and pints of interest marked.

On the reverse of the map is a whole swag of information about the area from accommodation to bike shop locations. Useful information on preparing for a tour and details of points of interest is also provided.

Copies can be obtained from the Government Map Centre in Adelaide or the Department of Recreation and Sport.

### Draft Helmet Testing Standard released for comment

The Standards Association of Australia has recently released a document for comment which outlines new testing procedures for the Lightweight Protective Helmet Standard which covers bicycle helmets. The Standards Association was recently criticised by a number of bicycle user groups including the Bicycle Federation for poor testing requirements in relation to helmet retention systems.

### New insurance scheme to be launched

The Bicycle Australia organization, the country's only national bicycle touring body, has announced a bicycle insurance scheme which breaks important new ground.

The scheme will be launched in November and will provide third party property, third party personal and public liability for \$1,000,000. This will be available for an additional \$10 on top of the main cover.

Minimum cover for the bicycle is \$250.00 and there will be an excess of \$50.00. The scheme will cover damage to or loss of bicycle by accidental collision, burglary, house breaking or larceny, vandalism, storm and tempest and fire.

The scheme is available to Bicycle Australia members only. BA membership fees for a one year period are \$15.00 and this goes toward supporting the development of a national network of rural cycle trails. Premium costs will be 4 percent of the agreed value plus \$10 for the bicyclists third party cover. Stamp duty and a processing fee of \$5.00 will apply.

Bicycle Australia can be contacted on (02) 264 2521 for further information.



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To take out a gift subscription for your friend simply fill in the address blank below. Please include your own name and address in the space provided, include your payment and send this postage paid mailer today.

## Back Issues

*Freewheeling* Back Issues are available either singly at \$2.00 per issue (3-9, 11-19, 21-26) and \$2.50 (27,28) including postage. Sets are also available at substantial savings: Set Number 1 costs \$13.50 and contains issues 4-9 and 11-15. Set Number 2 costs \$12.50 and contains issues 16-19 and 21-26. Issue number 3 is in short supply and can only be purchased singly. Issues 1,2,10 and 20 are unfortunately out of print and will not be reprinted.

## Find your way with the Freewheeling Index.

The *Freewheeling* Index of Issues 1-15 holds the key to hundreds of pages of articles, tour guides and useful reviews. Each issue is designed to last that's why the Index is such a useful guide to the pleasures of *Freewheeling* back issues. \$2.00 including postage. Order on this postage paid mailer.

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# Tee-shirt sell out

**Freewheeling** is clearing it's stock of tee-shirts all at below cost price. Now's the time for a bargain, provided we have your size. Unfortunately we can't offer bargains on postage (the APO won't co-operate) so postage is \$1.00 per order. Order more than one and reduce your cost. As stocks are limited, please state your alternative preference

Our complete stock is listed below so hurry and order now before stocks sell out. Some sizes will go fast.

**The original Sydney to the 'Gong Official Ride Shirt.** 1982 logo on blue

cotton/poly shirt. Was \$5.00 **NOW \$3.00.** Only sizes available: 10, 12, 14.



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**Freewheeling One for the Road Tee-shirt.** An original design in two colours on cotton/poly fabric. Never to be reprinted. Was \$7.50 **NOW \$5.00.** Only sizes available: 10 and 12 in White, Bone, Blue or Pink.

**1984 Sydney to the 'Gong Guides Singlet.** In pink 100% cotton with dark blue design front and back. Very limited quantity. These have not previously offered for sale and have only been worn by the 1984 'Gong Ride Guides. Only one size 18 **\$7.00.**



*freewheeling  
sydney to the gong*

**1983 Sydney to the 'Gong Official ride shirt.** Original Phil Somerville cartoon design on 100% cotton shirt. Only 200 in existence and going fast. Was \$7.50 **NOW \$5.00.** Only sizes available: Bone colour 14 and 18. White Chinese Double swan brand size 18/20 Only.

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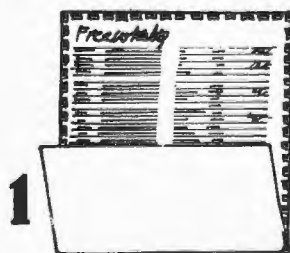
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# Classifieds

## PERSONALS

The Freewheeling Personal Classifieds is a special section for readers who want to contact others, send messages to loved ones and issue pleading offers of reconciliation to estranged tandem partners.

Freewheeling Personals is a free service. You may place a thirty word ad plus your contact details. Longer ads cost 30 cents for each additional word over the 30 word limit. Some contact information (telephone number postal address) must be included to denote a genuine submission.

Fat tyre fanatics men and women wanted to help research a national Wilderness Trail. If you are fit and don't mind crossing flooded streams then this is for you. Contact Warren Salomon at Freewheeling (02) 264 8544.

Wanted Information leading to the location of a person willing to divulge information and advice on the best way to do a cycle tour of India and SE Asia. Any help greatly appreciated. Contact Julian Barry (089)854 527

## TOUR MATES

Tour Mates is a service to readers wishing to find companions for bicycle trips and holidays. Both the Personals and the TourMates are a free service for the first thirty words plus name and address (or phone number), thirty cents for every word thereafter. You must include name, address and phone number for verification purposes though you may request that all or part of it be withheld.

New Zealand Companions wanted for part of tour. Mostly camping, some walking also. Probably Feb-March 1986. Medium distances. Contact John Ling (02) 518 9296.

## National Bike Events Calendar

Help us to publicise your Bike Event by sending details to us early. If you are planning a ride in the coming Summer and Autumn you should be sending your notice to Freewheeling National Bike Events Calendar now. Our readers will spread the word like wildfire.

## NOVEMBER

**November 3 The Double Century.** Starts Aldgate Shopping Centre. A scenic tour on quiet roads passing through historic Copper towns and the gold rush crossing at Wellington. The route also passes through the historic town of Strathalbyn. Rated hard. A short course of 107 km is available. Support vehicles, St Johns Ambulance Free refreshments, certificates, badges and a chance to win prizes to the value of \$1000 in our lucky draw. This event is part of the SA Touring Cyclists Grand Slam Series. For full details contact Peter Pye (08) 2236929 (AFH).

**November 2 Australian Mountain Bike Association Public Meeting** This meeting to be held in Sydney prior to the National Titles will form a steering committee to form AMBA as an incorporated national body to foster the development of Mountain Bike recreational use and competition in this country. Full details will be published in the next Freewheeling

**November 3 Apollo National Mountain Bike Championships** The second mountain bike Nationals will be held this year in the Sydney region on a fierce circuit in outer urban forest land. The Apollo Nationals will see riders competing from all over the country. See elsewhere in this issue. Full details contact Martin Whiteley (02) 921 922.

**Sunday November 17 Geelong-Otway Century Tour** Held every year in conjunction with the Geelong Springing this century

**Companion wanted** for ride from Adelaide to Perth via Esperance in March 1986. Contact D Cox, 24 The Crescent, Brighton SA 5048. Phone (08) 296 7928

**Europe Companion(s)** wanted for a cycling tour of Europe beginning in France. Low budget, could include some work. Start about April 1986 - Route and duration flexible. Write to Melissa Davies, Alcoota Station PMB 27 via Alice Springs NT 5751.

**India Companions** wanted for ride across India. Starting early April 1986. Khatmandu to Bombay. Four to five weeks approximately. Contact Geoff Kinchin, (02) 622 3447.

**Tasmania Touring companions** for cycle tour of Tasmania, approx 3 weeks leaving after Christmas 1985. Some experience advised, we plan to travel East and West Coasts. Contact Peter Signorini 131 Dublin Rd Ringwood East 3135. (03) 870 1910.

**Volcano crossing** Indonesia volcano crossing. Anyone interested in crossing the Tengger Mountains in East Java? Cycle almost to the top of Boomo Volcano. Climb Mt Semeru, 3600m. Both active. One week. Contact Vic Esbensen, PO Box 94 Thompson Rd PO., Singapore 9157.

## WANTED

**Wanted rare Freewheelings** Back issues 1, 2, 10 and 20. Will negotiate on price. Contact J W Hardie, PO Box 329, Warragul VIC 3820.

## TOURS

**Budget cycling tours in China.** Three weeks in China plus five days in Hong Kong for only US\$995. Contact Bike China Tours GPO Box 9484 Hong Kong.

uses a course along some of the most beautiful coastal roads in the country. Full details contact: Bob Jordan (052) 26 2500.

**Sunday November 24. The Fourth Annual Repco Freewheeling to the 'Gong Ride.** Cash prizes and helmets for the best dressed team of four riders. This years 'Gong ride will be bigger and better than ever before. Entry details and forms in this issue and in Sydney and Wollongong bike shops. 85 km. Morning tea, extensive support and entertainment all laid on. Return train travel option with the co operation of the State Rail Authority.

**November 23 - December 1 Ride The Southern Cross Trail.** A Bicycle Australia ride from Cootamundra to Albury/Wadonga to link with the Great Victorian Bike Ride if you are keen. Full support. Meals vehicle to carry luggage and route notes. Uses Bicycle Australia's newly developed Southern Cross Bike Trail. Contact (02) 264 2521.

## DECEMBER

**Saturday November 30 - Sunday December 8. The Great Victorian Bike Ride.** Its on again this summer. A spectacular long distance touring event which attracted over 2100 riders last year. Don't miss it this year. Full details in next Freewheeling.

## JUNE

**June 2 - June 26 Cairns to Cape York.** Bicycle Australia's ultimate adventure tour departs Cairns mid winter bound for Cape York Peninsular. You will need a fat-tired bike and be able to carry your own gear and some group equipment. Ride fee will include return air from Thursday Island and all food and provisions along the way. Full details contact: Bicycle Australia (02) 264 2521.

**These clubs regularly run rides in their cities and welcome new comers. Some even publish touring calendars listing forthcoming rides. Contact them for details.**

**Audax Australia** (03)435 4437 (02)607 8686. **Bicycle Australia** (02)264 2521. **Brisbane Bicycle Touring Association** (07) 369 9326. **Canberra Pedal Power ACT** (062) 49 7167. **Geelong Bicycle Touring Club** (052)26 2500. **Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club** (03)836 0440. **Newcastle Cycleways Movement** (049)46 8298. **Bicycle Institute of New South Wales** (02)212 5628. **South Australian Touring Cyclists Association** (08)332 0956. **Tandem Club of Australia** (03)241 4453. **Cycle Touring Association of West Australia** (09)349 2310.

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**The Num Bum Protector.** A sheep skin bicycle seat cover. Suits standard and racing saddles. Comfortable, durable washable. \$20.00 postage paid. Money back if not satisfied. Send cheque or M/O to C & N Locker, "Happy Valley" Adaminaby NSW 2630.

## HIRE

**Rent-a-Cycle Tasmania** 10-speed low gearing, all frame sizes, ladies and gents. Completely equipped for touring. Postal bookings accepted. Seven years hiring experience. Brochure, rates, your questions. 36 Thistle St Launceston, Tasmania Phone (003) 44 9779

**Mountain Bike Hire** in Melbourne. Hillman Cycles have all-terrain bikes for hire in all sizes for day weekend or week long hire. Hire now from the ATB experts and find out what fat-tyre flying is all about. Hillman Cycles, 46 Grantham St West Brunswick Vic Phone (03) 380 9685

## BOOKS

**Bicycle books for bicycle riders.** Phone or send your name and address to Bicycle Australia, Freepost 19, PO Box K499, Haymarket 2000, (02) 264 2521 and we'll keep you up to date on the latest bicycle touring and general bicycling books. We'll also tell you about our rides program and our bicycle insurance scheme. Do it now. There is an answering machine from 7.30am to 9pm and we're usually in 9-5 on weekdays. Not even the answering machine works weekends - it prefers to go bicycle touring - don't you?

**Cycle racing enthusiasts** you need 'VELO 85' Europes most authoritative racing results book. 376 pages includes everything - TOUR DE FRANCE, Classics, all other events, Olympic Games, World Championships, Professional, Amateur, Ladies, Six Days. Send \$24 to Jandel, PO Box 392, Mt Druitt NSW 2770.

## INSURANCE

**Bicycle insurance** designed by cyclists for cyclists. Our new scheme starts at the end of November and caters for you. Third party and public liability insurance included, plus cover on theft, accident etc. The price is good, too. Ring or send your name and address to Bicycle Australia, Freepost 19, PO Box K499, Haymarket 2000, (02) 264 2521 and we'll send you our information package.

## TOURS

**Planning to go touring?** Our route guides cover Melbourne to Brisbane and we'll have Brisbane to Rockhampton and Melbourne to Adelaide out by the end of the year. We also have guides to various rides in Victoria, the Southern Highlands of NSW, Tasmania's east coast, the Snowy Mountains and Victoria's Strzelecki Ranges. All this and New Zealand too. Ring or send your name and address to Bicycle Australia, Freepost 19, PO Box K499, Haymarket 2000, (02) 264 2521 and we'll send you our information package.

**Freewheeling Classifieds** are seen by over 12000 readers across the country. Rates for 1985 are: \$12.00 per 30 words or less. 40 cents for each additional word. 15 percent discount for six insertions or more 10 percent discount for three insertions or more. Payment with order please. Send payment and typed copy to: Freewheeling Classifieds, PO Box K26 Haymarket NSW 2000.

## The Freewheeling Index

At last the publication that completes any Freewheeling set - the Index of Issues 1 - 15.

This valuable reference is your key to the many technical articles, reviews, tour guides, reference articles and travel pieces locked away within the first fifteen issues of Freewheeling.

Order your copy today. No Freewheeling subscriber should be without one. \$2.00

Car racing ace Alan Jones had his road licence suspended for running into a cyclist. Oh, and the terrible fuss it caused. After all, it was only a cyclist, it wasn't as if he hit a car. Reminds me of the number of people getting suspended sentences and bonds and the like for killing cyclists in Australia. Cyclists are really unimportant when it comes to the criminal and traffic courts in this country.



"Another cyclist fatality? Send the body over to Recycling. We're running short on speed bumps."

Liverpool people get all the worst news: 'Double yellow lines which were up to half an inch (12mm at the current exchange rate) because of over-painting were causing cyclists to wobble off their bikes, Cheshire Police Committee were told.'

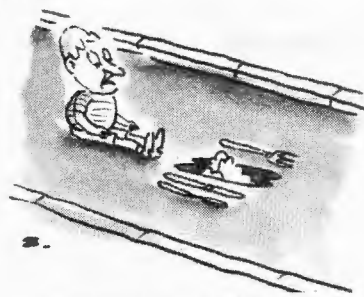


Many activist cyclists campaign for bicycle racks in shopping areas, railway stations, universities and wherever else cyclists are expected to turn mystically into pedestrians. This is foolish as the following item from the Mid-Sussex Times indicates: 'If all the bumps in the High Street were ironed out, locals would have nothing on which to prop their bicycles, warned Mr Charles Sayers at a meeting of Hurstpierpont Parish Council.' Then again, the following item indicates the folly of trying to mend them, but for a different reason. It appeared in the Chiswick and Brentford Gazette before making it to *Punch* magazine's Country Life column. 'The holes in the road are four inches (10cm) deep, and I do my best each week by trying to fill them

80 Freewheeling

## Rambling

with the uneaten portions of rice pudding from Sunday lunch. But it is to no avail.' Would have to be quite a meal to have much effect with modern traffic loads, but you never know.

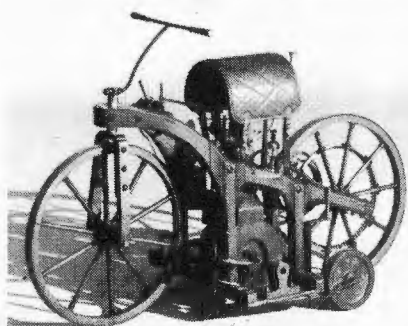


"Not bloody rice pudding again!"

In the 1950s Britain's *Daily Express* carried the following item: 'Nicholas Steel-Jessop, 20-year-old insurance clerk of Needham Market, put on a top hat and frock coat and rode 85 miles (130km) to London on a penny farthing bicycle. He returned by train next day with the penny farthing in the guard's van. He said: 'When I was jilted it made me feel an awful failure. The ride restored my confidence.' Oh well, I resumed bicycling after losing my shirt in business, so it must be a good reviver.

Junk mail seems to be with us to stay. Lately I have been receiving a slightly higher class of junk. For about a century Peugeot (France) and Mercedes (Germany) have been slogging it out over who invented the automobile. Peugeot was a bicycle maker. The first automobile was (according to Mercedes) a Daimler motorcycle. Who cares, we don't even know who invented the bicycle. Thankfully Leonardo da Vinci has no "Manager, Corporate Relations" to deluge me with recycled trees on the subject of how he beat Hobby Horse to the finishing post. Besides, the original motorcycle (if that's what it was) had trainer wheels. Harrumph!

The first motorcycle by Daimler 1885



Letters about bicycling to the editors of Australian newspapers are usually about the need for registration of cyclists or bicycles, they certainly lack something compared to the following letter to the *London Sun*. 'During the last six months I have knocked over no fewer than four cyclists. On each occasion the cyclist was entirely to blame. In future I shall let them take the consequences of their own folly, and make no effort to avoid them.' Australians planning to tour the sceptred isle are warned, as are immigration officials.



Have you found your cyclo-computer doesn't work after a while? Probably because it has magnets in the wheel sensors and they have been put next to the computer part at some stage. Apparently they can zap the circuits inside and clear your computer's tiny memory, thus making it a cycling zombie. Keep electrical fields, magnets and extreme heat away from your computer and you could save yourself a bundle.



The bicycle trade must feel it is under assault from the chain stores already, but this penny farthing replica on sale in a Sydney Grace Bros store indicates a new turn. I doubt they will sell too many at \$1,000-plus, but lots of people in this society have everything but a penny farthing, including a credit card.



# A reviewers notebook

Our publisher/editor Warren Salomon offers his thoughts on our bicycle testing policy.

To gain a reasonable knowledge of a machine it takes a period of three or four weeks of daily riding where possible. All of the bikes tested so far have gone through a similar program. For mountain bikes it was necessary to ride the bikes on rough roads to check for general stability. You may think that because this facet of a bikes performance is seldom mentioned in reviews that it is not noted in the first place. The fact is that so far I have not tested any lemons and this must be a favourable reflection on the quality of the bikes currently available to riders in this country.

So what does this have to do with test riding bikes? Well, apart from general stability and road handling, the major differences between brands and models is in the quality type and cost of the frame, the componentry and and of course the way its all put together. When two different bikes cost the same then it is important to know which equipment has been used on each and why.

Until Freewheeling came along there was very little information being passed on to the end user about bikes and bike equipment. Some of our long standing readers have complained that we have "gone commercial" with our bike reviews and product information. I'm sorry but we **are** the major source of information on bicycles and bicycling in Australia and a large proportion of our readers depend on our reviews and product information to help them with difficult decisions.

Just the other day a reader rang me and asked my opinion on a touring bike they were planning to buy. They had been to three different shops and had three different choices. The bikes were all competing models in a similar price category and all were good bikes. In fact I had ridden two of them previously and was able to refer the person to my published reviews. The third bike was also discussed and as it was important for that person to reach their own decision I outlined a few important differences between the machines.

They eventually decided on one of the two bikes with a lightweight frame. The other had better parts but a not-as-good frame. The moral: it is important to know something about the equipment and frame that comprise each machine. You begin to see which is the better bike that way.

When I began publishing road tests a number of years ago it was in response to requests from readers. Even the major overseas mags were only just getting into it. Nowadays comparison charts are all the go. That way you can compare whole categories (like the 29 mountain bikes surveyed in this issue) at a glance. Its a lot of work to assemble but I still prefer to get to know a bike by riding it.

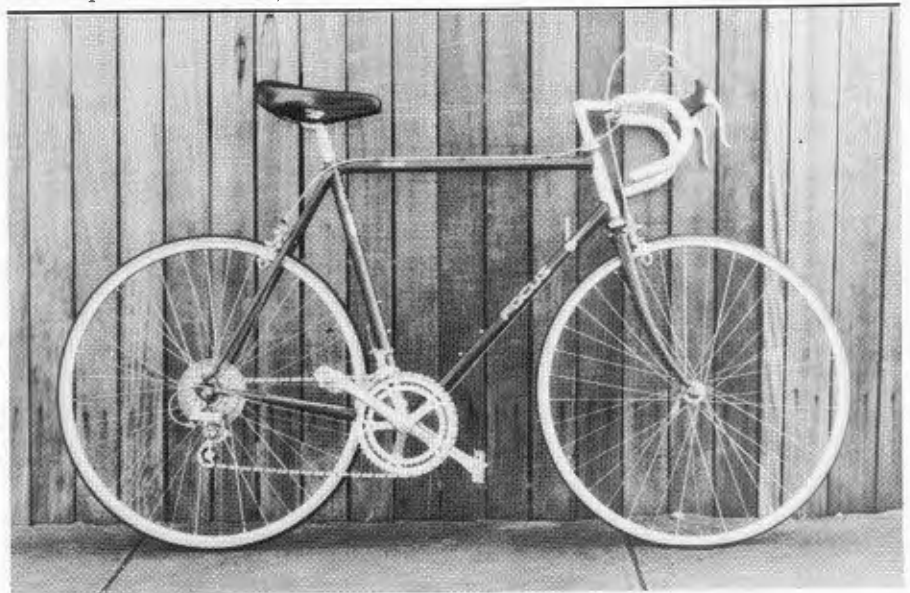
I guess when you have to write hundreds of words describing a bike you have to get to know it first hand. That knowledge comes from the riding.

One further point that requires comment is the omission of weights from our bike specifications. As any bike shop sales person eager for a sale knows this is a contentious area. The problem is that the stated weight of a bike depends on a number of factors

such as frame size, type of tyres fitted and the presence of additional equipment such as racks, waterbottle cages, stands etc. The frame size factor has been the biggest problem to date and we have in the past been caught in the crossfire when one manufacturer felt that their bike was shown to be heavier than an other because the test bike had a larger frame size.

This is not to avoid a responsibility to our readers its just that I believe that the whole issue of weight is a simplistic non issue. More important is the frames make-up. What type of tubing is used? A lugless frame is lighter but I would sooner have a lugged frame racing bike than a lugless one because the former is the stronger. An other factor is whether all of the frame tubes are the same material and what type of fork tips and drop outs are used. Finally derailleur 'A' may be lighter than derailleur 'B' but may perform poorly by comparison.

In short the true weight of the bike (unless the same equipment is used) is measure of a number of factors. You should be able to gauge from my review whether its a lightweight bike or not and before you get lured by the blank statement.



## Focus RS 500

A true lightweight from a new range of Japanese bicycles

In between mountain bikes it was a pleasure to hop onto a completely different machine and attempt to get to know it. Focus is a new brand of bicycles made in Japan by Araya and distributed in Australia by a new company Bikecorp. Their range of bikes looked great in the colour catalogue so I chose a mid-range model the RS 500 for my first test report.

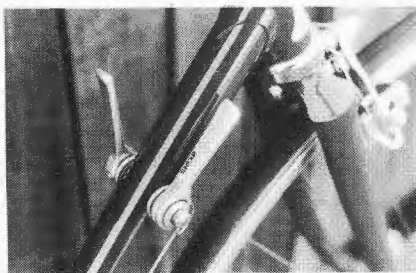
After weeks of soft and sluggish fat tyres the narrow high-pressure 700c tyres seemed worlds apart. It was good to be back on the smooth tarmac zipping along on a true lightweight.

And lightweight the RS 500 is. With its Tange 900 chrome moly tubing (mangalloy forks and high tensile on

rear stays) and all alloy componentry throughout the bike is designed for fast riding. Some concessions however have been made to the general rider who has fitness as their prime concern. The 14-28 six-speed rear freewheel gives slightly more gear range than that on a professional road racing machine.

A comfortable anatomic saddle is one other inducement for the general rider or lightweight tourer.

Apart from these points the RS-500 is equipped for sports use. The narrow Araya 20A modular alloy 19.6 mm rims are among the finest available from Japan. The alloy small flange hubs are a new design from Suzue with labyrinth



The smooth brazed on Cyclone levers on the Focus RS 500

seals to keep out road dirt and moisture.

The bike lacked the toe clips and straps expected of a true racer. Its pedals were good quality MKS Sylvan alloy and were attached to an SR SA alloy

double chianwheel set with 52/42 rings - a common racing combination.

Focus have provide their RS 500 with an impressive gear changing system. The new design SunTour Cyclone front and rear derailleurs are controlled by levers brazed onto the down tube. The gears shifted smoothly and positively.

The Dia Compe G-500N brakes have recessed allen key centre bolts which add to the bike's smooth clean appearance. The silver brake cables match the silver tape on the handlebars and contrast beautifully with the deep red enamel of the frame.

On the road the RS 500 was a fast mover which tracked faultlessly. Its frame geometry is well suited for fast riding. It has a steep 74 degree seat tube and a 73 degree head tube angles.

This bike would be a fine machine for the triathlete or club racer. If other Focus machines are as well built as this one then they should sell well in the months ahead. A very snazzy bike and well equipped too.

### Focus RS 500

Price: \$529.00

Sizes: 49 53 58 64 cm Tested: 58

Colours: Fire red

#### Frame

Tubing: Main tubes - Tange 900 chrome moly double butted with forged dropouts. Rear stays - high tensile steel. Fork blades - mangalloy  
Head tube angle: 73 degrees  
Seat tube angle: 74 degrees  
Bottom bracket height: 270 mm  
Fork offset: 50 mm  
Wheel base: 1015 mm  
Chain stay: 415 mm  
Frame mounts: 2 Bidons, gear levers, gear & brake guides.

#### Wheels

Rims: Araya 20A 700x16.5c alloy  
Hubs: Suzue sealed bearing Q/R  
Spokes: 14 gauge stainless  
Tyres: Mitsuboshi Trimline 700x25c 100 psi

#### Brakes

Model type: Dia Compe G 500-N with recessed bolt  
Levers: Dia Compe PN 204C with black gum hoods

#### Transmission

Pedals: MKS Sylvan Road alloy  
Crankset: SR SAC 100 alloy 52/42x170 mm cranks  
Chain: DID Lanner gold and black  
Freewheel: SunTour 6-speed Gold 14/28  
Derailleurs: SunTour New Cyclone  
Levers: SunTour New Cyclone

#### Head assembly

Head set: Tange MA 40 sealed  
Handlebars: SR Custom alloy  
Handlebar covering: Pearl white tape  
Stem: SR Custom alloy 60 mm reach recessed allen key bolt

#### Saddle assembly

Saddle: Kashimax GTV-2 anatomic  
Seat pillar: SR Laprade 26.6 mm dia.  
Seat pillar bolt: Recessed allen key type

#### Accessories

Plastic spoke protector

#### Gearing

14 15 17 20 24 28  
52 100 94 83 70 58 50  
42 81 76 67 57 47 40

Frame and forks guaranteed for lifetime of purchaser, parts guaranteed for three months after purchase. Distributed by Bikecorp (03)568 0066.

## BICYCLE AUSTRALIA

# BICYCLE INSURANCE

At last, an insurance program designed by bicyclists for bicyclists. The scheme starts in late November and covers third party, public liability, theft, fire, vandalism, accident and more. The price is good and the policy is written in plain English.

As this magazine hits the presses, Bicycle Australia's insurance package is being prepared for posting to you. Fill in the form at the bottom of this advertisement and we'll send you our information package which tells you how to insure your bike for a realistic fee. It also tells you how to reduce your chances of losing your bike.

Minimum bicycle cover is \$250. You can have just the third party and public liability cover if you like or you can cover the bike as well.

For more information, fill in the form. You may use a photocopy or just send us the info or ring us and leave a message on our answering machine if we are out. The machine is on from 7.30am to 9pm Monday to Friday and we are in 9-5 roughly. The number is (02) 264 2521.

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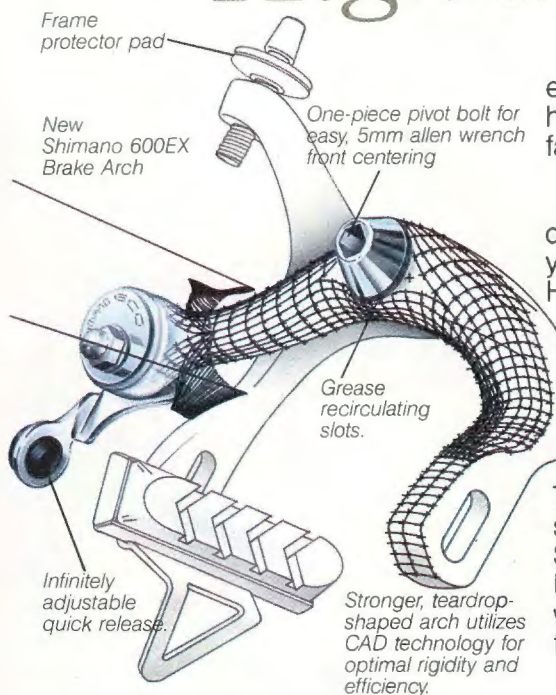
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Kalahari 1

Kalahari 3



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